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JAPAN

Its History Arts and Literature

BY

CAPTAIN F. BRINKLEY

ILLUSTRATED

VOLUME I

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JAPAN

ITS HISTORY ARTS AND LITERATURE

Chapter I

PRESENT JAPAN

JAPAN, since the resumption of her intercourse with Western nations forty years ago, has attracted much attention and inspired an extraordinarily large number of book-makers to discuss her beauties and her quaintnesses. Not one of these many authors has been wholly condemnatory. Most of them found something to admire in the manners and customs of her people, and all were charmed by her art and her scenery. Certainly, in the matters of seascape and landscape, Nature has been profusely kind to the Isles of Nippon. They rise out of the sea with so many graces of form, and lie bathed in an atmosphere of such sparkling softness, that it is easy to sympathise with the legend ascribing their origin to crystals dropped from the point of the Creator's spear. That they fell from some heaven of generous gods is a theory more consonant with their

aspect, than the sober fact that they form part of a great ring welded by volcanic energy in the Pacific Ocean, and that still, from time to time, they shudder with uneasy memories of the fiery forces that begot them.

Eastern Asia thrusts two long slender arms into far oriental waters: Kamtchatka in the north, Malacca in the south; and between these lies a giant girdle of islands, holding in its embrace Siam, Cochin China, the Middle Kingdom, Korea, and the eastern end of the Great White Czar's dominions, thus extending from latitude 50° north to the equator. When Commodore Perry anchored at Uraga, in 1854, the empire of Japan stretched along two-fifths of this girdle. Beginning on the south, at Cape Sata, the lowest point of the Island of Nine Provinces (Kiushu), it ended, on the north, with a disputed fragment of Saghalien, and an unsettled number of the attenuated filament of islets called the Kuriles. Since then, the empire has been pushed ten degrees southward. Now, including the Riukiu (Loochoo) Islands and Formosa, it constitutes three-fifths of the girdle — a distance of two thousand miles — and extends over thirty degrees of latitude and thirty-five of longitude. Its expansion has followed the law of geographical affinities — temporarily transgressed in the case of the United States only, and ultimately verified by their history also: — southward the star of empire has taken its way. One loss of territory

was suffered by Japan in that interval, perhaps by way of permanent punishment for standing so long aloof from the outer world: she had to surrender to Russia the island of Saghalien, — Karafuto, in her own nomenclature. But that exception tends only to emphasise the general rule of her expansion. First, she took steps to assure her possession of the Bonin group of islands — Ogasawara-jima, as she calls them — which, though discovered by her mariners two hundred years previously, were not included in her sphere of active occupation until 1871. Next she annexed the Riukiu archipelago, known to Western folks as the Loochoos, which form a series of stepping-stones between her shores and Formosa. They were claimed by China as an integral part of her empire, and the incidents of their acquisition by Japan almost involved the latter in a war with her colossal neighbour, at that time (1874) believed to be a Power of immense military resources. But Japan thought that she had a title to the islands, and she asserted it with courageous tenacity. The war then averted with difficulty, broke out twenty years later, and ended in a complete victory for Japan, one of the fruits of her success being that she added Formosa and the Pescadores to her dominions, which thus consist now of five large islands and a multitude of islets, the latter scattered along her coasts or grouped into four clusters, — the Kuriles (Chinshima) on the north; the Bonins (Ogasawara-

jima) on the east; the Loochoo (Riukiu or Okinawa) on the south; and the Pescadores, off the southwest coast of Formosa.[1]

Territorial expansion has therefore been a feature of Japan's début upon the world's stage. Growth has marked the opening of her new career. The fact takes its place properly at the head of her modern records, for it constitutes a convincing proof that the diet of Western civilisation has brought to her an access of vigour, instead of overtaxing her digestion, as was generally feared at first.

To speak of a country as making its début upon the world's stage, is to suggest the idea of youth. But the age of the Japanese nation, measured by the mere lapse of centuries, is very mature. They themselves claim to have been an organised State for twenty-six hundred years, and there is no valid reason to deny at least the proximate accuracy of their estimate. It is a great age, yet insignificant compared with that of the neighbouring empire, China, which can count fully the double of Japan's tale of years. Both are ancient from an Occidental point of view, and perhaps because their fellowship with the West has been so short in comparison with the long succession of cycles covered by their records, it has become a habit to bracket them together as simultaneously introduced to the circle of civilised States. There is, however, a radical

[1] See Appendix, note 1.

difference between the two countries. China stands, in the Far East, an imposing figure with her gigantic expanse of territory, her immense population, and her vast wealth of undeveloped resources. Such elements seem capable of being moulded into a world-moving force, and their potentialities have even appalled some leaders of European thought. But if history teaches anything it teaches that there is only one grand climacteric in the career of a nation. Beyond the summit descent is inevitable. The continuity of the downward grade is never broken by a second eminence. As it fares with a man or with a tree, so it fares with a nation's growth or decay. China long ago reached the zenith of her greatness, and has been sinking steadily to lower levels ever since. She was never an isolated State, husbanding her resources in seclusion and waiting to be galvanised into new life by contact with rival countries. Her very name, the "Middle Kingdom," indicates the relation in which she stood to the rest of the world. Whatever other States had to give, she received as a tribute to her own ineffable superiority, not as an incentive to emulation and exertion. That frame of mind became at last an instinct. It destroyed her appetite for assimilation and condemned her to succumb to any civilisation she could not despise. Japan's case has been dissimilar from point to point. Her whole career has been a continuous effort of assimilation; her invariable attitude, that of

modest studentship. One advantage only she claimed over other States. It was the divine origin of her rulers and the consequent guardianship extended to her by the gods. But her deities were not supposed to contribute anything to her material civilisation. Their most beneficent function was tutelary. Hence her people never classed themselves above other nations in a progressive sense. They were always perfectly ready to accept and adopt every good thing that a foreign country had to offer, whether of philosophy, of art, of technique, of administration, or of legislation. That is a fact which stands out in doubly leaded capitals on the pages of Japan's story. From the very earliest hours of her national career the stranger was welcomed within her gates. Whoever brought to her any product of foreign learning, genius, or industry, whether from China, from Korea, or from the South Seas, was received with acclaim, and not merely granted a domicile, but also admitted to many of the most honourable offices the State had to bestow, and to the highest ranks of the social organisation. Many of her noble families trace their origin to emigrants from the Asiatic continent; many of her artists and men of letters are proud to show a strain of Chinese or Korean blood in their lineage.

There was, indeed, a long break in the continuity of that liberal attitude, a break of more than two hundred years. From the early part of the seventeenth century to the middle of the

nineteenth, Japan led an almost hermit existence. Of her own choice she closed her doors to all the nations of the Occident except the Dutch, and with them, too, her intercourse ultimately became an affair of haughty tolerance on one side and narrow privileges on the other. But if the world learned to regard her in those days as a semi-savage recluse, that was simply the world's misconception. Were the sentiments which, at the close of the nineteenth century, impel the United States and Australia to bar out the Chinese, and induce Russia and Germany to ostracise the Jews, — were those sentiments multiplied by factors of political apprehension and religious intolerance, they would still fall short of the feelings that Japan learned to cultivate towards Occidentals at the end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth. Opening her ports to their traders more freely than any other contemporaneous nation would have done, she found them rapidly denude her of her gold and silver. Showing towards the preaching and propagandism of their religion an attitude of tolerance absolutely without precedent in mediæval days, she discovered that the alien creed became a political weapon pointed at the heart of her own national integrity and independence. Her instincts had prompted her to be liberal and receptive; her experience had compelled her to be conservative and repellent. We who see things assume their due proportions in the long vista of the past, know that

a more patient trial would have dispelled her suspicions, and that instead of closing her gates against the world for the sake of Roman Catholicism two hundred and fifty years ago, she might safely have kept them open in its despite, and commenced then the career of progress which promises to carry her so far to-day. But to adopt such a course in the face of such dissuasive experiences, she must have been as much in advance of her time as she ultimately fell behind it by choosing a policy of isolation. No nation with which history makes us acquainted would have acted a part different from the one she selected, and if she clung to her seclusion long enough to be counted a benighted bigot, it was largely because a geographical accident made it easy for her, on the one hand, to live apart, and kept her, on the other, beyond the effective range of influences which would certainly have drawn her out of her hermitage. Besides, on the Occident only, or, to narrow the facts to their exact limits, on the Roman Catholic countries of the Occident only, did she turn her back between 1630 and 1857. The Dutch had commercial access to her dominions, and the Chinese might come and go at will. Grant that the Hollanders were subjected to humiliating restrictions, and grant also that there was no reciprocity of intercourse with China, since Japanese subjects might not cross to the neighbouring empire; yet it must still be conceded that these ultimate vetoes were dictated

by extraneous causes, whereas the previous sanctions reflected Japan's natural disposition. She had always been liberal by instinct, though her mood had sometimes become conservative by education.

If these facts are recognised, her modern career becomes much more intelligible. Many onlookers have wondered that a nation should be able to spring suddenly out of an isolation which three centuries of observance had crystallised into a creed, and should suddenly embrace an alien civilisation not merely with avidity, but also with aptitude such as only a thoroughly liberal mood could beget. The truth is that these singular feats indicated, not a change of nature, but the re-assertion of an inborn disposition. For eighteen centuries she had been freely borrowing and assimilating everything that her Oriental neighbours had to offer, and when, in the middle of the nineteenth, she discovered that the Occident was incomparably a greater teacher, she merely obeyed her immemorial tendency of entering the newly opened school. But, it may be urged, though that accounts for her liberalism, it does not explain her receptivity. It tells us why she did not cling to her temporary conservatism, but it does not tell us why her progress became so rapid as to surprise the world. When an American squadron arrived to break down her isolation, she did not possess even the beginnings of a national fleet or a national army; of an ocean-going mercantile marine; of

a telegraphic or postal system; of a newspaper press; of enlightened codes, of a trained judiciary, or of properly organised tribunals of justice; she knew nothing of Occidental sciences and philosophies; was a complete stranger to international law and to the usages of diplomacy; had no conception of parliamentary institutions or popular representation, and was divided into a number of feudal principalities, each virtually independent of the other, and all alike untutored in the spirit of nationality or imperialism. In thirty years these conditions were absolutely metamorphosed. Feudalism had been abolished; the whole country united under one administration; the polity of the State placed on a constitutional basis; the people admitted to a share in the government under representative institutions; an absorbing sentiment of patriotism substituted for the narrow local loyalties of rival fiefs; the country intersected with telegraphs and railways, and its remotest districts brought within the circuit of an excellent postal system; the flag of the nation carried to distant countries by a large mercantile marine; a powerful fleet organised, manned by expert seamen, and proved to be as capable of fighting scientifically as of navigating the high seas with marked immunity from mishap; the method of conscription applied to raising a large military force, provided with the best modern weapons and trained according to Western tactics; the laws recast on the most advanced principles

of Occidental jurisprudence and embodied in exhaustive codes; provision made for the administration of justice by well-equipped tribunals and an educated judiciary; an extensive system of national education inaugurated, with universities turning out students capable of original research in the sciences and philosophies of the West; the State represented at foreign courts by competent diplomatists; the people supplied with an ample number of journals and periodicals; the foundations of a great manufacturing career laid, and the respect of foreign Powers unreservedly won. Such a record may well excite wonder.

But before crediting the Japanese with exceptional qualities for the sake of their modern progress, we must agree upon a standard of comparison, and that is difficult, since the history of nations furnishes only one case approximately parallel to that of Japan. Were any liberal-minded Western people brought suddenly into contact with a civilisation immensely higher than its own, a civilisation presenting material advantages and attractions that the least intelligent must appreciate, who can venture to gauge the impulse of adoption or the speed of assimilation that such a people would develop? Suppose that to the eyes of the English of a hundred years ago there had been abruptly exposed a stage whereon railways ran, steamboats plied, telegraphs flashed their messages to limitless distances, telephones made whispers audible across continents, torpe-

does, breech-loaders, machine guns, and iron-clads revolutionised warfare, carriages were propelled by electricity, and men travelled at the rate of thirty miles an hour on machines which could not stand upright at rest, — would not the display have revolutionised England? Yet this catalogue of wonders has to be largely extended before it covers the exhibition by which Japan was dazzled forty years ago. No wonder that she stretched out eager hands to grasp such an array of novelties.

If that were all she had done, it might not be fair to say that any intelligent people would have acted with less vigour under similar circumstances. But Japan did not confine herself to adopting the externals of Western civilisation. She became an eager pupil of its scientific, political, moral, philosophic, and legislative systems also. She took the spirit as well as the letter, and by so doing differentiated herself effectively from Oriental States. It has been objected that this wholesale receptivity was limited to a few leaders of thought, — to the literati and the military patricians whose will had always been law to the commoners. Certainly that is true as to the initiative. But it is unimaginable that such sweeping changes could have been effected in a quiet and orderly manner had not the hearts of the people been with the reformers. In Japan no railways were torn up, no machines wrecked, no lines of telegraph demolished by labourers

who feared for their own employment or fanatics who saw their superstitions slighted. Rapid as was the pace set by the leaders of progress, the masses did not hang back. That tribute at least must be paid to the nation's intelligent liberality by any honest writer of its modern history. We may deny that other peoples might not have done as well, but we can scarcely affirm that any would have done better. The only known instance of parallel opportunity was China, and to China, after a hundred years of scrutiny, the advantages of Occidental civilisation are still invisible.

Another point to be noted in analysing the causes of Japan's success is that many phases of her own civilisation were superior to the civilisation of the West when she began to assimilate the better parts of the latter. She did not bring to the examination of Occidental systems and their products a mind wholly untrained to distinguish the good from the bad. In her social conventionalisms, in her refinements of life, in her altruistic ethics, in many of her canons of domestic conduct, in her codes of polite etiquette, in her applications of art, she could have given to Europe lessons as useful as those she had to learn from it. That she should see the right quickly might have been anticipated. Then there was her ambition, an absorbing sentiment. Almost from the first moment when she looked out on the world which had so long been hidden

from her, she detected the wide interval separating her material civilisation from that of the West. Thenceforth it became the constantly expressed aspiration of every educated Japanese that his country soon "get level" with Occidental nations in the race of progress. That wish was paramount from the very beginning. There was not the least attempt to throw any bridge of extenuation across the gulf of inferiority. The frankly recognised facts inspired an earnest resolve to alter them if possible, and as speedily as possible. How many Japanese students have overtaxed their powers of endurance under the goad of that aspiration, how many statesmen have made it the prime motive of their administration, no one can conceive who has not observed these people closely since they first stepped out of the shadow of isolation.

Strangers discussing the character of the Japanese have assigned to it an extraordinary element of patriotism, and inferred abnormal readiness to make sacrifices on the altar of love of country. There is no warrant for such a theory. The Japanese doubtless have their full share of patriotism, but they cannot claim an unexceptional measure of it. What is mistaken for an unusual abundance of the sentiment is simply its morbid activity, caused, on the one hand, by a genuine perception of the distance they have to traverse before they reach the elevation of prosperity and progress on which Occidental nations stand; on

the other, by the treatment they have received at the hands of those nations. The most tolerant of Europeans has always regarded the Japanese, and let them see that he regarded them, merely as interesting children. Languidly curious at best about the uses to which they would put their imported toys, his curiosity was purely academical, and whenever circumstances required him to be practical, he laid aside all pretence of courtesy and let it be plainly seen that he counted himself master and intended to be so counted. If the archives of the Japanese Foreign Office were published without expurgation, their early pages would make a remarkable record. Diplomatic euphemisms are the last thing to be sought there. And in that respect they reflect the demeanour of the ordinary foreigner. When not a harsh critic, he was either contemptuously tolerant or loftily patronising. The Japanese chafed under that kind of treatment for many years, and they resent it still; for though a pleasant alteration has gradually been effected in the foreigner's methods, the memory of the evil time survives. Besides, they neither consider the change complete, nor regard its causes with unmixed satisfaction. It is not complete because the taint of Orientalism has not yet been removed from the nation, and the causes are unsatisfactory because they suggest a low estimate of Western morality.

No one who should tell the Japanese to-day that the consideration they have won from the

West is due solely to their progress in peaceful arts would find serious listeners. They themselves held that belief as a working incentive twenty years ago, but experience has dissipated it, and they now know that the world never took any respectful notice of them until they showed themselves capable of winning battles. At first they imagined that they might efface the Oriental stigma by living up to civilised standards. But the success they had attained was scarcely perceptible when suddenly their victorious war with China seemed to win for them more esteem in half a year than their peaceful industry had won for them in half a century. The perception of that fact upset their estimate of the qualifications necessary for a place in "the foremost files of time," and had much to do with the desire they henceforth developed for expanded armaments. Their military and naval forces had been proved competent to beat China to her knees with the utmost ease, yet they proceeded at once to double their army. Onlookers watch these doings with interest and speculate whether Japan's financial resources can bear such a strain, but do not seem to consider seriously what it all signifies, or how Japan accounts to her own conscience for these extravagances. Yet the answer appears to lie not far from the surface. To reach it we must first recognise why she drew the sword against China in 1894, — not the approximate cause of the struggle, but its remote cause. The approximate

cause is readily discernible. China's attitude towards Korea, her fitful interference in the little kingdom's affairs, her exercise of suzerain rights while uniformly disclaiming suzerain responsibilities, created a situation intolerable to Japan, who had concluded a treaty with Korea on the avowed basis of the latter's independence. A consenting party to that treaty, China nevertheless ignored it in practice, partly because she despised the Japanese and resented their apostasy from Oriental traditions, but chiefly because her ineffable faith in her own superiority to outside nations absolved her from any obligation to respect their conventions. Japan's material and political interests in Korea outweigh those of all other States put together. In asserting her commercial rights she could not possibly avoid collision with a Power behaving as China behaved. But there was another force pushing the two States into the arena: they had to do battle for the supremacy of the Far East. China, of course, did not regard the issue in that light. It was part of her immemorial faith in her own transcendence that the possibility of being challenged should never occur to her. But Japan's case was different. Her position might be compared to that of a lad who had to win a standing for himself in a new school by beating the head boy of his form. China was the head boy of the East-Asian form. Her huge dimensions, her vast resources, her apparently inexhaustible "staying power," entitled

her to that position, and outside nations accorded it to her. To worst her meant to leap at one bound to the hegemony of the Far East. That was the quickest exit from the shadow of Orientalism, and Japan took it. This is not a suggestion that she forced a fight upon her neighbour merely for the purpose of establishing her own superiority. What it means is that the causes which led to the fight had their remote origin in the different attitudes of the two countries towards Western civilisation. Having cordially embraced that civilisation, Japan could not consent to be included in the contempt with which China regarded it; and having set out to climb to the level of Occidental nations, she had to begin by emerging from the ranks of Oriental nations.

This analysis, if we push it to its logical sequel, brings us into the presence of a startling conclusion. Japan has risen to the headship of the Far East. Is that the goal of her ambition? One of her favourite sayings is, "Better be the tail of an ox than the comb of a cock." She is now the comb of the Oriental cock. That is not enough: she wants to be the tail of the Occidental ox. How is it to be done? Evidently by following the route that has already led her so far. She cannot turn back. Her destiny forces her on, and there is no mistaking the signpost set up by her recent experience. She has been taught that fighting capacity is the only sure passport to European esteem, and she has also

been told again and again, is still perpetually told, that her victory over China proved nothing about her competence to stand in the lists of the West. She will complete the proof, or try to complete it. Nothing is more certain, nothing more apparent to all that have watched her closely. Perhaps she has not yet formulated the project to herself in explicit terms. But it has found a lodgment in her heart, and unconsciously she is moulding her actions in obedience to it.

These are the reasons that render Japan such an interesting figure. She rivets our attention, not by what she has done, however remarkable that may seem, but rather by what she must still try to do. She has undertaken to demonstrate that an Eastern nation can act a leading part on the same stage with Western peoples, using the same properties and obeying the same directions. It is the first essay of the kind in history, and it will not be consummated without some stirring episodes.

From a physical point of view the Japanese race seems ill fitted for the competition upon which it has entered and for the grim struggle that lies before it. An army of Japanese is to an army of Europeans in respect of stature what an army of females in the Occident would be to an army of males. But the same might be said of the Sepoys or the Ghoorkas; yet no English general, estimating the results of a colli-

sion between Indian troops and Europeans, would think of counting the inches of the Ghoorka or the Sepoy. The Japanese, indeed, resemble the Ghoorkas very closely. There is the same lightness of movement, the same admirable balance of muscle and bone, the same symmetry of form and power of endurance. A very marked advantage in height is on the side of the Chinaman; so marked that from ancient times he has been accustomed to call the Japanese "pygmies." Nevertheless, in the war of 1894–95 the Chinese went down helplessly before the Japanese wherever the two met. The same difference of bulk exists in favour of the Korean, yet an even greater difference of fighting capacity has been practically established in favour of the Japanese. There is thus no reason to argue any physical disability on the part of the Japanese to take a successful part in a warlike struggle; and in the Chili campaign of 1900, when they marched in the van of Europe and America to the relief of Peking, they showed themselves at least as efficient as the soldiers of any other nationality. They have two very marked advantages: the simplicity of their diet, which immensely facilitates commissariat arrangements; and the excellence of their officers. It was owing in great part to the former fact that their war with China in 1894–95 cost them only twenty million pounds sterling. They conducted seven campaigns over-sea, involving a force of a hundred and twenty thousand men, and they

employed a navy of twenty-eight ships which remained on active service for nine months.

It was the cheapest belligerent feat on record, and it established for the Japanese the possession of a faculty which had been habitually denied to them by foreign critics, the faculty of organisation. For the purposes of that war their organisation was really admirable. Such an effort might have been expected to tax their strength to the utmost, to interrupt the course of every-day business, and to throw their domestic affairs into more or less confusion. It did nothing of the kind. The home life of the people went on placidly and regularly, as though not a ship or a soldier had been sent to meet a foreign enemy. Sometimes a little village community left their farm labours to cheer a detachment of troops *en route* for Manchuria or Korea, and sometimes the arrival of a batch of wounded Chinese created a passing thrill of excitement. But, for the rest, the great fighting machine worked with absolute silence and smoothness. The troops, carried over specially constructed railways outside the boundaries of the chief cities, or marched quietly at night through their streets, seldom attracted public attention; the fleet of fifty steam transports was descried once or twice gliding through the narrow strait that gives upon the China Sea, but never came into the vista of national observation; the newspapers reported yesterday that an army corps of twenty thousand men had embarked

for Liaotung, to-day that an equal force had landed in Shantung, but if these troops had sprung, fully equipped, from the sea at the place of their exit or destination, the country could not have known less of their comings and goings. There were no accidents, no miscarriages, no apparent errors of calculation or failures of foresight. One may urge, indeed, that neither was there any originality, since European modes were followed. But it is certain that before the war no foreign critic would have credited the Japanese with capacity to conduct such operations. He would have denied their power of organisation, and he is therefore constrained to attach as much value to the positive evidence of success as he would have inferred from the negative testimony of failure.

In truth this favourite theory about a want of organising faculty among the Japanese, like that other theory about their want of originality, rests on pure hypothesis aided by ignorance of history. To ascribe lack of originality to a nation which has given the world a new grammar of decorative art is as consistent with facts as to allege absence of organising ability among a people who have produced a Yoritomo, a Hideyoshi, and an Ieyasu. The two criticisms may be definitely dismissed.

And the officers that commanded in the field showed themselves as able as those that planned in the Cabinet. They shared every hardship that their men endured, ate the same food, were content with the same shelter, and took the larger

share of danger. The Japanese officer has this fine quality, that to a hereditary love of fighting he adds the zeal of a professional soldier. His heart is in his calling. He loves his uniform, has no aim in life higher than the discharge of his duty, and possesses the capacity for obedience which lies at the root of power to command.

There is nothing decrepit about such a nation. It is old in years, but the infused blood of Western civilisation has renewed its youth. The first result of its début on the world's stage has therefore been territorial expansion, a fact sufficiently significant to stand at the head of these pages.

Japan would go far if she were not crippled by a heavy handicap, want of money. She has been called the "England of the East;" but she differs radically from England in this vital respect that whereas Imperial England has only to follow whither the capital of commercial and industrial England overflows, industrial and commercial Japan is quite unable to utilise the opportunities which Imperial Japan creates. In China and Korea, Japanese diplomacy or Japanese armed strength has won valuable privileges and opened wide fields, but they remain to this day almost entirely unfruitful. Even in the home country the development of many promising enterprises is delayed for lack of funds. Everything is on a petty scale. There is not throughout the length and breadth of the land a factory or a tradal organisation that would be counted of even mediocre importance

in America or England. Seventy per cent of the nation's school-age children receive instruction, yet the total sum annually expended on this education is not twice the yearly income of one of the great colleges of the United States. The aggregate capital invested in all the banks, industrial, commercial, insurance, shipping, and agricultural companies throughout the empire is less than the fortune of a Rockefeller or a Vanderbilt. Many widow's mites are given to relieve distress, but the whole of the charitable and philanthropic donations made by private individuals during the thirty-two years of the *Meiji* era would look small by the side of a respectable Mansion House fund. So lilliputian are the dimensions of the market that a single speculation disturbs it. Consols are quoted, say at 95, but a purchase or sale of half a million dollars' worth would drive them up to 96 or more. The spirit of enterprise, stunted by this atmosphere of impecuniosity at home, naturally makes no excursions abroad. Railways wait in vain to be built by Japanese in Korea, new settlements to be colonised in China, large resources to be exploited in Formosa.

There remains, too, a disposition inherited from feudal times, a tendency to rely on official initiative and to shrink from every venture unaided by the State. Nearly all the material progress of the Meiji era has been led by the Government. Matters have greatly mended in that respect, but the writings of the vernacular

journals, with few exceptions, still show that instead of making opportunities for themselves, the people look to have them made for them officially. If they had stores of spare capital seeking investment, they would act a very different part on the neighbouring continent. But chill poverty freezes the current of their activity, and while they have an abundance of the imperial instinct, they lack the means of making it potential. That difficulty must cripple Japan seriously. A poor nation has never been great. She may succeed in filling her purse before the time comes to open it, but no resources now in sight definitely promise such a result. All that can be said of her is that she has boundless ambition ; that she has established her ability to reach great ends with small means, and that she will certainly bid for a far higher place than she has yet attained.

Chapter II

PRIMÆVAL JAPANESE

THERE are three written records of Japan's early history. The oldest[1] of them dates from the beginning of the eighth century of the Christian era, and deals with events extending back for fourteen hundred years. The compilation of this work was one of the most extraordinary feats ever undertaken. The compiler had to construct the sounds of his own tongue by means of ideographs devised for transcribing a foreign language. He had to render Japanese phonetically by using Chinese ideographs. It was as though a man should set himself to commit Shakespeare's plays to writing by the aid of the cuneiform characters of Babylon. A book composed in the face of such difficulties could not convey a very clear idea of contemporary speech or thought. The same is true, though in a less degree, of the other two[2] volumes on which it is necessary to rely for knowledge of ancient Japan.

It might reasonably be anticipated, arguing from the analogy of other nations, that some

[1] See Appendix, note 2.

[2] See Appendix, note 3.

plain practical theory would exist among the Japanese as to their own origin; that tradition would have supplied for them a proud creed identifying their forefathers with some of the renowned peoples of the earth, and that if the progenitors of the nimble-witted, active-bodied, refined, and high-spirited people now bidding so earnestly for a place in the comity of great nations, had migrated originally from a land peopled by men possessing qualities such as they themselves have for centuries displayed, many annals descriptive of their primæval home would have been handed down through the ages. There are no such theories, no such annals, no such traditions.

When the Japanese first undertook to explain their own origin in the three books spoken of above, so unfettered were they by genuine reminiscences that they immediately had recourse to the supernatural and derived themselves from heaven. Reduced to its fundamental outlines, the legend they set down was that, in the earliest times, a group of the divine dwellers in the plains of high heaven descended to a place with a now unidentifiable name, and thence gradually pushing eastward, established themselves in the "land of sunrise," giving to it a race of monarchs, direct scions of the goddess of light (Amaterasu). Many things are related about these heaven-sent folk who peopled Japan hundreds of years before the Christian era. They are things that must be

studied by any one desiring to make himself acquainted with the essence of her indigenous religion or her pictorial and decorative arts, for they there play a picturesque and prominent part. But they have nothing to do with sober history. Possibly it may be urged that nations whose traditions deal with a Mount Sinai, a pillar of cloud and fire, and an immaculate conception, have no right to reject everything supernatural in Oriental annals. That superficial retort has, indeed, been made too often. But behind it there undoubtedly lurks in the inner consciousness of the educated and intelligent Japanese a resolve not to scrutinise these things too closely. Whether or not the "age of the gods" — *kami no yo* — of which, as a child, he reads with implicit credence, and of which, as a man, he recognises the political uses, should be openly relegated to the limbo of absurdities; whether the deities had to take part in an immodest dance in order to lure the offended Sun Goddess from a cave to which her brother's rudeness had driven her, thus plunging the universe in darkness; whether the god of impulse fought with the god of fire on the shores of the Island of Nine Provinces; whether the procreative divinities were inspired by a bird; whether the germs of a new civilisation were carried across the sea by a prince begotten of the sunshine and born in the shape of a crimson jewel, — these are not problems that receive very serious consideration in Japan, though neither a Colenso nor a

Huxley has yet arisen to attack them publicly. They are rather allegories from which emerges the serviceable political doctrine that the emperors of Japan, being of divine origin, rule by divine right. It is the Japanese historian's method, or the Japanese mythologist's manner, of describing an attribute claimed until very recently by all Occidental sovereigns, and still asserted on behalf of some. As for the foreign student of Japan's ancient history, these weird myths and romantic allegories have induced him to dismiss it as a purely imaginary product of later-day imagination. The transcendental elements woven into parts of the narrative discredit the whole in his eyes. And his scepticism is fortified by a generally accepted hypothesis that the events of the thirteen opening centuries of the story were preserved solely by oral tradition. The three volumes which profess to tell about the primæval creators of Japan, about Jimmu, the first mortal ruler, and about his human successors during a dozen centuries, are supposed to be a collection of previously unwritten recollections, and it seems only logical to doubt whether the outlines of figures standing at the end of such a long avenue of hearsay can be anything but imaginary. Possibly that disbelief is too wholesale. Possibly it is too much to conclude that the Japanese had no kind of writing prior to their acquisition of Chinese ideographs in the fifth century of the Christian era. But there is little apparent hope

that the student will ever be in a position to decide these questions conclusively. He must be content for the present to regard the annals of primæval Japan as an assemblage of heterogeneous fragments from the traditions of South Sea islanders, of central Asian tribes, of Manchurian Tartars and of Siberian savages, who reached her shores at various epochs, sometimes drifted by ocean currents, sometimes crossing by ice-built bridges, sometimes migrating by less fortuitous routes.

What these records, stripped of all their fabulous features, have to tell is this: —

At a remote date, a certain race of highly civilised men — highly civilised by comparison — arrived at the islands of Japan. Migrating from the south, the adventurers landed on the Southern island, Kiushiu, and found a fair country, covered with luxurious vegetation and sparsely populated by savages living like beasts of the field, having no organised system of administration and incapable of offering permanent resistance to the superior weapons and discipline of the invaders, who established themselves with little difficulty in the newly found land. But on the main island two races of men very different from these savages had already gained a footing. One had its headquarters in the province of Izumo, and claimed sovereignty over the whole country. The other was concentrated in Yamato. Neither of these races knew of the other's existence, Izumo and

Yamato being far apart. At the outset, the immigrants who had newly arrived in Kiushiu, imagined that they had to deal with the Izumo folk only. They began by sending envoys. The first of these, bribed by the Izumo rulers, made his home in the land he had been sent to spy out. The second forgot his duty in the arms of an Izumo beauty whose hair fell to her ankles. The third discharged his mission faithfully, but was put to death in Izumo. The sequel of this somewhat commonplace series of events was war. Putting forth their full strength, the southern invaders shattered the power of the Izumo court and received its submission. But they did not transfer their own court to the conquered province. Ignorant that Izumo was a mere fraction of the main island, they imagined that no more regions remained to be subjugated. By and by they discovered their mistake. Intelligence reached them that, far away in the northeast, a race of highly civilised men, who had originally come from beyond the sea in ships, were settled in the province of Yamato, holding undisputed sway. To the conquest of these colonists Jimmu, who then ruled the southern immigrants, set out on a campaign which lasted fifteen years, and ended, after some fierce fighting, in the Yamato rulers' acknowledging their consanguinity with the invader and abdicating in his favour.

Whether Jimmu's story be purely a figment of later-day imagination or whether it consists of

poetically embellished facts, there can be no question about its interest, since it shows the kind of hero that subsequent generations were disposed to picture as the founder of the sacred dynasty, the chief of the Japanese race. The youngest of four sons, he was nevertheless selected by his "divine" father to succeed to the rulership of the little colony of immigrants then settled in Kiushiu, and his elder brothers obediently recognised this right of choice. He was not then called "Jimmu": that is his posthumous name. Sanu, or Hiko Hohodemi, was his appellation, and he is represented in the light of a kind of viking. Learning of Yamato and its rulers from a traveller who visited Kiushiu, he embarked all his available forces in war-vessels and set out upon a tour of aggression. Creeping along the eastern shore of Kiushiu, and finally entering the Inland Sea, the adventurers fought their way from point to point, landing sometimes to do battle with native tribes, sometimes to construct new war-junks, until, after fifteen years of fighting and wandering, they finally emerged from the northern end of the Inland Sea, and established themselves in Yamato, destined to be thenceforth the Imperial province of Japan. In this long series of campaigns the chieftain lost his three brothers: one fell in fight; two threw themselves into the sea to calm a tempest that threatened to destroy the flotilla. Such are the deaths that Japanese in all ages have regarded as

ideal exits from this mortal scene; deaths by the sword and deaths of loyal self-sacrifice. To the leader himself, after his decease, the posthumous name of Jimmu, or "the man of divine bravery," was given, typifying the honour that has always attached to the profession of arms in Japan. The distance from this primitive viking's starting-point to the place where he established his capital and consummated his career of conquest, can easily be traversed by a modern steamer in twice as many hours as the number of years devoted by Jimmu and his followers to the task. That the craft in which they travelled were of the most inefficient type, may be gathered from the fact that the viking's progress eastward would have been finally interrupted by the narrow strip of water dividing Kiushiu from the main island of Japan, had not a fisherman seated on a turtle emboldened him to strike sea-ward. Thenceforth the turtle assumed a leading place in the mythology of Japan, — the type of longevity, the messenger of the marine deity, who dwelt in the crystal depths of the ocean, his palace peopled by lovely maidens. The goddess of the sun shone on Jimmu's enterprise at times when tempest or fog threatened serious peril, and a kite, circling overhead, indicated the direction of inhabited districts when he and his warriors had lost their way among mountains and forests.

How much of all this was transmitted by tradition, written or oral, to the compilers of

Jimmu's history in the eighth century; how much was a mere reflection of national customs which had then become sacred, and on which the political scholars of the time desired to set the seal of antique sanction, who shall determine? If Sanu and his warriors brought with them the worship of the sun, that would offer an interesting inference as to their origin. If the aid that they received from his light was suggested solely by the grateful homage that rice-cultivators, thirteen centuries later, had learned to pay to his beneficence, then the oldest written records of Japan must be read as mere transcripts of the faiths and fashions of the era when they were compiled, not as genuine traditions transmitted from previous ages. But such distinctions have never been recognised by the Japanese. With them these annals of their race's beginnings have always commanded as inviolable credence as the Testaments of Christianity used to command in the Occident. From the lithographs that embellish modern bank-notes the sun looks down on the semi-divine conqueror, Jimmu, and receives his homage. From the grand cordon of an order instituted by his hundred and twenty-seventh successor, depends the kite that guided him through mountain fastnesses, and on a thousand works of art the genius of the tortoise shows him the path across the ocean. If these picturesque elements were added by subsequent writers to the outlines of an ordinary armed invasion by foreign

adventurers, the nation has received them and cherishes them to this day as articles of a sacred faith.

The annals here briefly summarised reveal three tides of more or less civilised immigrants and a race of semi-barbarous autochthons. All the learned researches of modern archæologists and ethnologists do not teach us much more. It is now known with tolerable certainty that the so-called autochthons were composed of two swarms of colonists, both coming from Siberia, though their advents were separated by a long interval.

The first, archæologically indicated by pit-dwellings and shell-mounds still extant, were the *Koro-pok-guru*, or "cave-men." They are believed to be represented to-day by the inhabitants of Saghalien, the Kuriles and Southern Kamschatka.

The second were the Ainu, a flat-faced, heavy-jawed, hirsute people, who completely drove out their predecessors and took possession of the land. The Ainu of that period had much in common with animals. They burrowed in the ground for shelter; they recognised no distinctions of sex in apparel or of consanguinity in intercourse; they clad themselves in skins; they drank blood; they practised cannibalism; they were insensible to benefits and perpetually resentful of injuries; they resorted to savagely cruel forms of punishment,—severing the tendons of the leg, boiling the arms, slicing off the nose, etc.; they used stone im-

plements, and, unceasingly resisting the civilised immigrants who subsequently reached the islands, they were driven northward by degrees, and finally pushed across the Tsugaru Strait into the island of Yezo. That long struggle, and the disasters and sufferings it entailed, radically changed the nature of the Ainu. They became timid, gentle, submissive folk; lost most of the faculties essential to survival in a racial contest, and dwindled to a mere remnant of semi-savages, incapable of progress, indifferent to improvement, and presenting a more and more vivid contrast to the energetic, intelligent, and ambitious Japanese.

But these Japanese — who were they originally? Whence did the three or more tides of immigration set which ultimately coalesced to form the race now standing at the head of Oriental peoples? Strangely varying answers to this question have been furnished. Kampfer persuaded himself that the primæval Japanese were a section of the builders of the Tower of Babel. Hyde-Clarke identified them with Turano-Africans who travelled eastward through Egypt, China, and Japan. Macleod recognised in them one of the lost tribes of Israel. Several writers have regarded them as Malayan colonists. Griffin was content to think that they are modern Ainu, and recent scholars incline to the belief that they belonged to the Tartar-Mongolian stock of Central Asia. Something of this diversity of view is due to the fact that the Japanese are not a pure race. They pre-

sent several easily distinguishable types, notably the patrician and the plebeian. This is not a question of mere coarseness in contrast with refinement; of the degeneration due to toil and exposure as compared with the improvement produced by gentle living and mental culture. The representative of the Japanese plebs has a conspicuously dark skin, prominent cheek bones, a large mouth, a robust and heavily boned physique, a flat nose, full straight eyes, and a receding forehead. The aristocratic type is symmetrically and delicately built; his complexion varies from yellow to almost pure white; his eyes are narrow, set obliquely to the nose; the eyelids heavy; the eyebrows lofty; the mouth small; the face oval; the nose aquiline; the hand remarkably slender and supple.

Here are two radically distinct types. What is more, they have been distinguished by the Japanese themselves ever since any method of recording such distinctions existed. For from the time when he first began to paint pictures, the Japanese artist recognised and represented only one type of male and female beauty, namely, that distinguished in a marked, often an exaggerated, degree by the features enumerated above as belonging to the patrician class. There has been no evolution in this matter. The painter had as clear a conception of his type ten centuries ago as he has to-day. Nothing seems more natural than the supposition that this higher type represents the

finally dominant race of immigrants; the lower, their less civilised opponents.

The theory which seems to fit the facts best is that the Japanese are compounded of elements from Central and Southern Asia, and that they received their patrician type from the former, their plebeian from the latter. The Asiatic colonists arrived *viâ* Korea. But they were neither Koreans nor Chinese. That seems certain, though the evidence which proves it cannot be detailed here. Chinese and Koreans came from time to time in later ages; came occasionally in great numbers, and were absorbed into the Japanese race, leaving on it some faint traces of the amalgamation. But the original colonists did not set out from either China or Korea. Their birthplace was somewhere in the north of Central Asia. As for the South-Asian immigrants, they were drifted to Japan by a strange current called the "Black Tide" (*Kuro-shiwo*), which sweeps northward from the Philippines, and bending thence towards the east, touches the promontory of Kii and Yamato before shaping its course permanently away from the main island of Japan. It is true that in the chronological order suggested by early history the southern colonists succeeded the northern and are supposed to have gained the mastery; whereas among the Japanese, as we now see them, the supremacy of the northern type appears to have been established for ages. That may be ex-

plained, however, by an easy hypothesis, namely, that although the onset of the impetuous southerns proved at first irresistible, they ultimately coalesced with the tribes they had conquered, and in the end the principle of natural selection replaced the vanquished on their proper plane of eminence. But this distinction, it must be observed, is one of outward form rather than of moral attributes. Neither history nor observation furnishes any reason for asserting that the so-called "aristocratic," or Mongoloid, cast of features accompanies a fuller endowment of either physical or mental qualities than the vulgar, or Malayan, cast. Numerically the patrician type constitutes only a small fraction of the nation, and seems to have been lacking in a majority of the country's past leaders, as it is certainly lacking in a majority of her present publicists, and even in the very *crême de la crême* of society. The male of the upper classes is not generally an attractive product of nature. He has neither commanding stature, refinement of features, nor weight of muscle. On the other hand, among the labouring populations, and especially among the seaside folk, numbers of men are found who, though below the average Anglo-Saxon or Teuton in bulk, are cast in a perfectly symmetrical mould and suggest great possibilities of muscular effort and endurance. In short, though the aristocratic type has survived, and though its superior beauty is universally recognised, it has not impressed

itself completely on the nation, and there is no difficulty in conceiving that its representatives went down before the first rush of the southern invaders, but subsequently, by tenacity of resistance and by fortitude under suffering, recovered from a shock which would have crushed a lower grade of humanity.

Histories that describe the manners and customs of a people have been rare in all ages. The compilers of Japan's first annals, in the eighth century, paid little attention to this part of their task. Were it necessary to rely on their narrative solely for a knowledge of the primæval Japanese, the student would be meagrely informed. But archæology comes to his assistance. It raises these men of old from their graves, and reveals many particulars of their civilisation which could never have been divined from the written records alone.

The ancient Japanese — not the *Koro-pok-guru* or the Ainu, but the ancestors of the Japanese proper — buried their dead, first in barrows and afterwards in dolmens. The barrow was merely a mound of earth heaped over the remains, after the manner of the Chinese. The dolmen was a stone chamber. It had walls constructed with blocks of stone, generally unhewn and rudely laid but sometimes hewn and carefully fitted; its roof consisted of huge and ponderous slabs; it varied in form, sometimes taking the shape of a long gallery only; sometimes of a gallery and a

ORNAMENTAL POTTERY, TAKEN FROM DOLMENS.

chamber, and sometimes of a gallery and two chambers; over it was built a mound of earth which occasionally assumed enormous dimensions, covering a space of seventy or eighty acres, rising to a height of as many feet, and requiring the labour of thousands of workmen. The builders of the barrows were in the bronze age of civilisation; the constructors of the dolmens, in the iron age. In the barrows are found weapons and implements of bronze and vessels of hand-made pottery; in the dolmens, weapons and implements of iron and vessels of wheel-turned pottery. There is an absolute line of division. No iron weapon nor any machine-made pottery occurs in a barrow; no bronze weapon nor any hand-made pottery in a dolmen. Are the barrow-builders and the dolmen-constructors to be regarded as distinct races, or as men of the same race at different stages of its civilisation? Barrow and dolmen bear common testimony to the fact that before the ancestors of the Japanese nation crossed the sea to their inland home, they had already emerged from the stone age, for neither in barrow nor in dolmen have stone-weapons or implements been found, though these abound in the shell-heaps and kitchen-middens that constitute the relics of the *Koro-pok-guru* and the Ainu. But, on the other hand, barrow and dolmen introduce their explorer to peoples who stood on different planes of industrial development.

testimony to the truth of the Japanese historical narrative which represents Jimmu as the leader of the last and most highly civilised among the bands of colonists constituting the ancestors of the present Japanese race. Thus the "divine warrior," after having been temporarily erased from the tablets of history by the modern sceptic of the West, is projected upon them once more from the newly opened graves of the primæval Japanese. It is true that there is an arithmetical difficulty: it has been supposed that the dolmens do not date from a period more remote than the third century before Christ, whereas Jimmu's invasion is assigned to the seventh. But no great effort of imagination is required to effect a compromise between the uncertain chronology of the Japanese annals and the tentative estimates of modern archæologists.

Some of the burial customs revealed by these ancient tombs resemble the habits of the Scythians as described by Herodotus. The Japanese did not, it is true, lay the corpse of a chieftain between sheets of gold, nor did they inter his favourite wife with similar pomp in an adjoining chamber; but they did deposit with him his weapons, his ornaments, and the trappings of his war-horse, and in remote times they followed the barbarous rule of burying alive, in the immediate vicinity of his sepulchre, his personal attendants, male and female, and probably also his steed. To the abrogation of that cruel rule is due much

CONTENTS OF DOLMENS.

1. Shoes of Gilt Copper, length 12¾ inches.
2. Stirrup irons, extreme breadth 7¼ inches.
3. Horse-bits, Rokuya Dolmen, ¼ length.
4. Swords with ornamental mounts.
5. Iron Cuirass and Helmet, ⅛ length.
6. Bronze Arrow-heads, ½ length.
7. Bronze two-handled Sword.
8. Penannular Ring. Copper, plated with Gold.

information about the garments worn in early epochs, for in the century immediately preceding the Christian era a kind-hearted emperor decided that clay figures should be substituted for human victims, and these figures, being modelled, however roughly, in the guise of the men and women of the time, tell what kind of costumes were worn and what was the manner of wearing them. Collecting all the available evidence, the story shapes itself into this: —

Prior to the third, or perhaps the fourth, century before the Christian era, when the dead were interred in barrows, not dolmens, the Japanese, though they stood on a plane considerably above the general level of Asiatic civilisation, did not yet understand the forging of iron or the use of the potter's wheel. They were still in the bronze age, and their weapons — swords, halberds, and arrow-heads — were made of that metal. Concerning the fashion of their garments not much is known, but they used, for purpose of personal adornment, quaintly shaped objects of jasper, rock-crystal, steatite, and other stones. Then, owing probably to the advent of a second wave of immigration from the continent, the civilisation of the nation was suddenly raised, and the country passed at once from the bronze to the iron age, with a corresponding development of industrial capacity in other directions, and with a novel method of sepulture having no exact prototype except in Western Europe. The new-comers seem to have

been, not a race distinct from their predecessors, but a second outgrowth of colonists from the same parent stem. Where that stem had its roots there is no clear indication, but it is evident that, during the interval between the first and the second migrations, the mother country had far excelled its colony in material civilisation, so that, with the advent of the second band of wanderers, the condition of the Japanese underwent marked change. They laid aside their bronze weapons and began to use iron swords and spears, and iron-tipped arrows. A warrior carried one sword and, perhaps, a dagger. The sword had a blade which varied from two and a half feet to over three feet in length. These were not the curved weapons with curiously modelled faces and wonderful trenchancy which became so celebrated in later times. Straight, one-edged swords, formidable enough, but considerably inferior to the admirable *katana* of mediæval and modern eras, they were sheathed in wooden scabbards, having bands and hoops of copper, silver, or iron, by means of which the weapon was suspended from the girdle. The guards were of iron, copper, or bronze, often coated with gold, and always having holes cut in them to render them lighter. Wood was the material used for hilt as well as for scabbard, but generally in the former case and sometimes in the latter a thin sheet of copper with gold plating enveloped the wood. Double barbs characterised the arrow-head, and as these projected about four

inches beyond the shaft, a bow of great strength must have been used, though of only medium length. Armour does not seem to have been generally worn, or to have served for covering any part of the body except the head and the breast. It was of iron, and it took the shape of thin bands of metal, riveted together for casque and cuirass. Neither brassart, visor, nor greaves have been found in any dolmen, and though solerets of copper are among the objects exhumed, they appear to have been rather ornamental than defensive. As to shields, nothing is known. No trace of them has been found, and it seems a reasonable inference that they were not used. Horses evidently played an important part in the lives of the second batch of immigrants, for horse-furniture constantly appears among the objects found in dolmens. The bit is almost identical with the common "snaffle" of the Occident. Made of iron, it has side-rings or cheek-pieces of the same metal, elaborately shaped and often sheeted with gilded copper. The saddle was of wood, peaked before and behind and braced with metal bands, and numerous ornaments of *repoussé* iron covered with sheets of gilt or silvered copper were attached to the trappings. Among these ornaments a peculiar form of bell is present: an oblate hollow-sphere, having a long slit in its shell and containing a loose metal pellet. Stirrups are seldom found in the dolmens, and the rare specimens hitherto exhumed bear no resemblance to the large, heavy,

shoe-shaped affairs of later ages, but are rather of the Occidental type.

The costume of these ancient Japanese had little in common with that of their modern descendants. They wore an upper garment of woven stuff, fashioned after the manner of a loosely fitting tunic, and confined at the waist by a girdle, and they had loose trousers reaching nearly to the feet. For ornaments they used necklaces of beads or of rings, — silver, stone, or glass; finger-rings, sometimes of silver or gold, sometimes of copper, bronze, or iron plated with one of the precious metals; ring-shaped buttons; metal armlets; bands or plates of gilt copper which were attached to the tunic; ear-rings of gold, and tiaras. Not one item in this catalogue, the tiara excepted, appears among the garments or personal ornaments of the Japanese since their history and habits began to be known to the outer world. No nation has undergone a more radical change of taste in the matter of habiliments and adornments. The ear-ring, the necklace, the finger-ring, the bracelet, and the band or plate of metal attached to the tunic, — all these passed completely out of vogue so long ago that, without the evidence of the contents of the dolmen, it would be impossible to conceive the existence of such things in Japan. One of the most noteworthy features of the people's habits in mediæval or modern times is that, with the solitary exception of pins and fillets for the hair, they eschew

every class of personal ornament. Yet the dolmens indicate that personal adornments were abundantly, if not profusely, employed by the ancestors of these same Japanese in prehistoric days. Indeed, the only features common to the fashions of the Japanese as they are now known and the Japanese as their sepulchres reveal them, are the rich decoration of the sword-hilt and scabbard and of the war-horse's trappings.

As to the food of these early people, it seems to have consisted of fish, flesh, and cereals. They used wine of some kind, though of its nature there is no knowledge, and their household utensils were of pottery, graceful in outline but unglazed and archaically decorated. Whether or not they possessed cattle there is no evidence, nor yet is it known what means they employed to produce fire, though the fire-drill appears to be the most probable.

That they believed in a future state is evident, since they buried with the dead whatever implements and weapons might be necessary in the life beyond the grave; that ancestral worship constituted an important part of their religious cult is proved by the offerings periodically made at the tombs of the deceased; and that idolatry was not practised or superstition largely prevalent may be deduced from the complete absence of charms or amulets among the remains found in their sepulchres.

Chapter III

JAPAN ON THE VERGE OF HISTORY

IN one respect Japan's story differs from that of nearly all other countries: the current of her national life was never diverted from its normal channel by successful foreign invasions or by any overwhelming inflow of alien races. It is true that her codes of ethics and social conventions were largely modified, from time to time, by foreign influences. But it is also true that she impressed the stamp of her own originality on everything coming to her from abroad, and that, leading what may be called an uninterruptedly domestic existence during twenty-five centuries, she developed characteristics so salient that in studying her annals there is forced upon our attention a continuity of easily synthesised traits.

No traces of autocratic sovereignty are to be found in the history of the early colonists. The general who led the invaders received recognition as their chief, but the offices of the newly organised States were divided among his principal followers, not as arbitrarily conferred gifts, but as spoils falling to them by right. The occupants

of these posts were not removable at the caprice of the Sovereign, and they enjoyed the privilege of transmitting their offices to their sons; a system of hereditary officialdom which remained in operation through long ages.

Thus the national polity in the earliest times assumed a patriarchal form. Public affairs were administered by a group of official families, and at the head of all stood a lineal descendant of the divine ancestors, the degree of his sway varying from time to time according to the docility of his coadjutors.

All these great families were supposed to be of divine lineage; they traced their origin to a *Mikoto* (an augustness) just as the Sovereign himself did. Some, presumably the most deserving, obtained offices near the throne when the spoils of conquest were distributed; others were appointed to provincial posts, and as these latter generally found their administrative regions occupied by barbarians whom they had to subdue at first and to hold in check afterwards, they gradually organised principalities virtually independent of the central government. That, however, is a historical development subsequent to the era now under consideration.

It does not appear that there was anything like a fully organised administration until some thirteen hundred years after the date traditionally assigned for the conquest of Yamato by the Emperor Jimmu. The functions of government

were divided, not in accordance with any principle of convenient discharge, but simply with reference to the claims of the persons undertaking them. To two of the imperial princes were entrusted sacerdotal and executive duties; to two others, military duties, which consisted chiefly of guarding the new palace and capital; and to two others, the duties of worship and administration in the provinces. The performance of religious rites formed an essential part of state-craft in those times. In fact, the term (*matsuri*) for "worship" was identical with that for "government," and the identity continued until a very recent era, so that, in the language of every-day life, no distinction was made between the sacred business of prayer and the secular business of ruling. That fact reveals very clearly the foundation upon which the national polity stood. The Sovereign was the nation's high-priest. Like the Jewish patriarchs, he interceded for his people direct with Heaven, and ruled them by the authority he derived from the deities. His administrative assistants followed the same principle. They invoked the aid of Heaven for the discharge of all their duties, and its blessing upon all the affairs of the people under their control.

It cannot be affirmed that the high officers of State had any officially recognised designations in remote times, and the absence of such designations goes far to confirm the theory that the functions of the patriarchs were of a general

character, and that no attempt to divide them systematically was made. They did, however, receive appellations from the people. Just as household servants speak of "the master" and a ship's crew of "the captain," so the first governor of a province came to be called "the imperial person of the country" (*Kuni no mi-yatsuko*); the first agricultural superintendent was known as "the lord of the fields" (*agatanushi*); the first high chamberlain as "the great man of the palace" (*miya no obito*). In like manner, such titles as "great body" (*omi*), "master of the multitude" (*muraji*), "honorable intermediary" (*nakatomi*) and so on, were employed as terms of respect, and ultimately passed into use as official titles.

The share assigned to a patriarch in the central or provincial administration became his inalienable property. He transmitted it to his son and to his son's son. Thus not only were offices hereditary but their occupants multiplied, so that all the posts and perquisites of a department fell finally into the possession of a clan. The head of the clan then came to be distinguished by the prefix *O* (great or senior); as *O-mi* (the senior honourable person), *O-muraji* (the great master of the multitude), and so on. There were no family names in the Occidental sense of the term. Men were distinguished instead by the titles of the administrative posts belonging to their houses. The name of the post preceded that of the per-

son, as was natural, so that a man was spoken of as "Hierarch Kasumi" (*Nakatomi no Kasumi*), or "Guardsman Moriya" (*Monobe Moriya*), or "Purveyor Kujira" (*Kashiwade no Kujira*).[1]

Eminent as was the position assigned to religion in the polity of the ancient Japanese, no trace of a doctrinal creed, as creeds are understood in the Occident, is found in their lives. Their burial customs show that they believed in an existence beyond the grave, but they seem to have troubled themselves little about the nature of that existence, or about transcendental speculations of any kind. The chief denizen of celestial space, according to their creed, was a tutelary deity, the Goddess of Light, and since her worship, or the worship of some lesser spirit, had to preface every administrative act of importance, religious rites were placed, as has been already stated, at the head of all official functions. Yet special buildings for ceremonial purposes did not originally exist. The Emperor, as the nation's high-priest, worshipped in the palace, where were kept the insignia of sovereignty, — the sword, the mirror, and the jewel of divine origin. Not until the first century before Christ were shrines erected apart from the palace, and the immediate cause of the innovation was a pestilence which the soothsayers interpreted as a heavenly protest against the method of worship then pursued. The creed was not exclusive. Its pantheon,

[1] See Appendix, note 4.

which in the beginning included only the deities of high heaven, was soon enlarged by the admission of other powers controlling the forces of nature, as well as by the spirits of deceased heroes, and ultimately received even the supernatural beings supposed to preside over the destinies of the aboriginal tribes. In other words, the civilised colonists consented to worship the ancestors of the semi-savage aborigines against whom they perpetually waged war. This might be interpreted to mean that upon the religion which the Japanese brought with them to Japan the religion of the autochthons whom they found there was engrafted. But nothing is known of the autochthonous creed. The true explanation seems to be that the Japanese, analysing their difficulty in subduing the aborigines, attributed it to the influence of the latter's deceased rulers, and concluded that the wisest plan would be to propitiate these hostile powers. Hence it is plain that they believed in malevolent spirits as well as in benevolent; or perhaps the more accurate statement would be that, according to their creed, immortal beings continued to be animated by the sentiments which had swayed them as mortals, and possessed power to give practical effect to their sentiments. They did not associate any idea of rewards and punishments with a future state. Their theory pointed to duality of the soul. They regarded it as consisting of two distinct elements: one the source of courage, strength, and aggressiveness;

the other the mainspring of benevolence, refinement, and magnanimity. In the good man these elements were blended harmoniously during life, and they survived in like proportions after the death of his body. But whatever had been the quality of the mortal tenement, the immortal tenant passed from the edge of the grave into the "sombre realm" (*Yomotsu-kuni*), which was separated from this world by a "broad slope" (*Yomotsu-hirazaka*), never recrossed by a spirit that had eaten anything cooked in the land of darkness. The offerings made at the tombs of the deceased had the purpose of providing against that disaster of eternal banishment, and, in another sense, were a mark of filial piety, the natural outcome of faith in the terrestrial interference of the departed.

In addition to the celestial and the terrestrial deities, the animal and vegetable kingdom supplied objects of worship. Monster snakes, supposed to destroy the crops, were propitiated by sacrifice, and giant trees, venerated as the abode of supernal beings, were fenced off with ropes carrying sacred pendants.[1] The folk-lore of the nation includes several stories of losses and sufferings caused by cutting down sacred trees, and the rituals show that herbs, rocks, and trees were supposed to have the power of speech prior to the descent of the deities, when dumbness fell upon all these objects.

[1] See Appendix, note 5.

Out of such beliefs a rudimentary form of the doctrine of metempsychosis easily emerges. Yamatake, the great hero of prehistoric Japan, was transformed into a white bird, and Tamichi, the generalissimo vanquished by the Ezo, became a monster snake which devoured the desecrators of his tomb. Some ethnologists allege that the custom of human sacrifices existed in early days; but the theory is founded on a solitary legend of the Perseus-and-Andromeda type, which does not seem to justify any such inference. Everything, indeed, goes to show that while a sacrificial element undoubtedly entered largely into the rites of worship, it never involved the taking of human life, the objects offered to the gods being confined to the fruits of the earth, birds, animals, and the products of labour. Auguries were obtained by burning the hoof of an ox or the shoulder-blade of a stag, and deciphering the lines in the calcined bone. But there is reason to believe that no such method of soothsaying had a place in the primæval superstitions of the Japanese; it probably came to them from Korea. A device more consistent with their own beliefs was to invoke a sign from heaven by music, when a deity descended and inspired the musician.

The most famous legend in Japan is that which is supposed to describe the origin of religious services. The Goddess of the Sun (Amaterasu Okami), having retired into a cave so

that the universe was plunged in darkness, the eight hundred myriads of lesser deities assembled to propitiate her. Thereafter the act of worship took this shape: five hundred saplings of *sakaki* (*Clyera japonica*) with their roots were arranged round a mirror (made of copper) which typified the goddess of light. In the upper branches of the trees were hung balls representing the sacred jewel, and in the lower branches, blue and white pendants. A prayer was then recited by the chief hierarch, in lieu of the Emperor, and the service concluded with a dance and the lighting of fires, in imitation of the devices employed by the deities to lure the sun goddess from her retirement. The prayers offered on these occasions were probably rendered into exact formulæ at an early date, but they were not reduced to writing until the tenth century. Twenty-seven of them have been preserved, and seventy-five are said to have been in use. Their language is often majestic, poetical, and sonorous,[1] but not one of them contains a word suggesting that the primæval Japanese troubled themselves much about a future state after death or about posthumous punishment for sins committed during life. Their idea of crime was that it polluted the person committing it, but that its commission was inevitable. Hence purification services were performed twice in every year, the gods of the swift streams, the tumbling cataracts, and the

[1] See Appendix, note 6.

raging tides being invoked to wash away and dissipate all offences. First among crimes was the removal of a neighbour's landmark — described as breaking down divisions between rice-fields; then followed the damming of streams and the destruction of water-pipes, whence it may be inferred that the problem of irrigation for purposes of rice-culture proved as perplexing to these ancient folk as it does to their modern descendants. On the same plane of heinousness stood the cruelty of flaying the living or the dead, and among lesser crimes were enumerated cutting and wounding, incest and the practice of witchcraft. Every religious service was accompanied by offerings betokening gratitude for past favours or beseeching future blessings, and the things prayed for were good harvests, an abundance of food, security of dwelling-houses against natural calamities, and against the intrusion of reptiles or polluting birds, tranquil and efficient government, and protection from tempests, conflagrations, pestilence, inundations, and vengeful deities — in a word, prosperity and peace. Incidentally, these rituals further show that the Japanese believed in a solid firmament walling the universe, though certain passages suggest that they thought this distant envelope light enough to be supported by the winds, which not only filled space, but were also capable of serving as a ladder for the feet of the deities when they descended to the earth. The fermented liquor

called *sake*, that is to say, rice-beer, must have been highly appreciated in early times, for no ritualistic enumeration of offerings made to the gods is without a reference to "piled up *sake*-pots" or "bellying beer-jars ranged in rows."

It has been shown above that the story of the first mortal emperor's conquest of Yamato indicates the use of clumsy boats and a marked deficiency of navigating enterprise. But the rituals of *Shintô* — as Japan's ancient creed is called — do not confirm that idea. They speak of ships that "continually crowd on the wide sea-plane," and of "a huge vessel moored in a great harbour, which, casting off her stern moorings, casting off her bow moorings, drives forth into the vast ocean."

It is curious that among the evils from which deliverance was besought, earthquakes are nowhere mentioned, and that robbery is not included in the list of polluting crimes. Some have inferred that this commonest of all sins in all nations was unknown among the ancient Japanese. But that is a doubtful conclusion. It might be inferred with equal justice that incest was regarded with abhorrence, since the rituals class it among sins contaminating the perpetrator. Yet it is certain that men had relations with the mothers of their wives and even with their own mothers and daughters, — though facts will presently be cited which mitigate the horror of such acts, — that unnatural crimes of a most

disgusting character were committed not infrequently, and that no veto is known to have been pronounced against them.

There was, in fact, no system of philosophy nor any code of ethics. India had Sidathra, China had Confucius, but neither in ancient, mediæval, nor modern time has Japan produced a great teacher of morality. She has had plenty of brilliant interpreters, plenty of profound modifiers, but no conspicuous originator.

The right of primogeniture was not recognised in the age here spoken of. A father chose his heir at will. Generally the choice fell on his youngest son, for reasons which become plain when the marital customs of the time are considered. The conception of marriage was practically limited to cohabitation. A husband incurred no obligations or responsibilities towards his wife. It is related that the first emperor (Jimmu), chancing to meet a band of seven maidens, made immediate proposals that one of them should become his mate. The girl agreed, and the sovereign passed the night at her house, a visit which he thenceforth became entitled to repeat whenever he pleased. That was wedlock. To be married involved no change in a woman's life except the liability to receive visits from her husband. As to the man, there was absolutely no duty of fidelity on his side. He might form as many different unions as fancy prompted. The children were brought up by the mother, and it

was possible for one household to remain in entire ignorance of another's existence. Mutual knowledge generally signified feuds and fighting, for the father's favour was naturally bestowed on the children of his latest affection, and the elder branches of his offspring frequently rebelled against such partiality. Another result of the system was marriages between half-brothers and half-sisters, or between uncles and nieces. These unions were not condemned by the moral code of the time. Indeed, the existence of any relationship was sometimes unknown to the parties themselves, a man's wives and families in different places not necessarily having any mutual acquaintance. The only restriction recognised was that children of the same mother must not intermarry. It is easy to see that under these circumstances the ties of consanguinity did not bind men very closely. To be sons of the same father carried no obligation of friendship or sympathy. Often in the annals of the innumerable civil wars that disturbed Japan the reader is shocked by deeds of vengeance, treachery, or ambitious truculence that violate all the dictates of natural affection. The origin of these displays of callousness or cruelty must be sought in the ancient system which condemned a wife to perform the functions of a mere animal, and deprived her children of any claim on their father's love and protection.

"Houses" have been spoken of above, but a reservation is necessary: the upper classes lived

in houses; the lower inhabited caves or holes in the earth, choosing hillsides for sites in order to escape inundations, which were then of calamitous dimensions and frequency. These cave-dwellings seem to have measured from four to six square yards in area, and to have been closed by a door four or five feet high. Common folk used them all the year round, and even princes and nobles found them comfortable as winter residences, transferring themselves in summer to huts built near the entrance of the caves.[1] In constructing houses of the best type, the palaces of the era, flat stones[2] were sunk in the ground to form a foundation, and on these was raised a stout upright, the "heavenly pillar" (*ame no mihashira*). At every corner also a pillar of lesser dimensions was erected, and between the tops of these corner pillars, as well as from each of them to the central post, beams were stretched, the whole bound together with wistaria withes. Reeds or rushes served for thatching, and heavy logs laid over the thatch prevented it from being blown away. The ends of the tie-beams projected high above the roof, a feature permanently preserved in *Shintô* architecture; a hole in the thatch gave exit to the smoke of the cooking-fire; the frames of doors and windows were tied in their places with stems of creepers, and the walls consisted of logs or bark, or of both combined. These edifices generally stood near a stream which

[1] See Appendix, note 7.

[2] See Appendix, note 8.

carried off impurities; mats, rushes, or skins were spread for a bed, and furs, cloth, or silk served for coverlets. The floor was of timber, but whether of logs or of boards is not known. A religious service of consecration for propitiating the deities of timber and rice was held when the first emperor built his palace at Kashibara after he had conquered Yamato, and it became customary thenceforth to repeat the service at coronations and after harvest fêtes. Common people, when they built a residence, invited their friends to a "house-warming," but the Emperor invoked the gods against the entry of snakes that bit the inmates, or of birds that polluted the food; against groaning timbers, loosening ties, unevenness of thatch, and creaking floors.

All this indicates a comparatively low type of civilisation. And yet, as has been shown in a previous chapter, objects found in the tombs of these early Japanese show that they possessed much skill in the casting and chiselling of metals, that their arms and the trappings of their horses were highly ornamented, and that their costume had many elements of refinement.

Perhaps the most special feature of their habits was cleanliness. It distinguishes them from all other Oriental nations. Whether this propensity grew out of their religious observances or was merely reflected in them, there is no means of determining. Knowledge is limited to the facts that they held every form of pollution to be

offensive to the gods; that the chief *Shintô* service, the "high mass" of the cult, has for its purpose the purification of the believer's body as well as of his heart: that chastity and simplicity were fundamental features of all the rites, constructions, and paraphernalia of the creed, and that the virtue of cleanliness received practical acknowledgment even among the lowest classes.

Songs and dances appear among the most ancient pastimes of the people. Love is supposed to have inspired the first ode composed in Japan, the Emperor Jimmu having been moved to song on meeting with the maiden Isuzu. The reference here is to mortal poets. A still earlier couplet is attributed to one of the immortals when she danced before the cave into which the Sun Goddess had retired. In the latter incident also ethnologists find the supposed origin of dancing, which from time immemorial has been at once a religious observance and an universally popular amusement. Virgins danced before the shrine of the Sun Goddess at the beginning of the nation, and from the highest noble to the meanest churl everyone loved the music of motion. The first costume-dance was prompted by pain, when a deity, vanquished in fight and threatened with drowning, painted his face red and lifted his feet in an agony of supplication. This *hayato-mai* (the warrior dance), as it is called, is still included among the classical mimes of the Imperial Court. It was performed to the music of a

stringed instrument (the Wa-kin)[1] and of a flute, perhaps accompanied by a drum. Even the spirits of the dead were supposed to be moved by song and dance. When a man died, his corpse was placed in a building specially erected for the purpose. There it lay for ten days, while the relatives and friends of the deceased assembled and venerated his spirit, making music and dancing. This ceremony of farewell seems to have been originally prompted by a hope of recalling the departed, but it soon lost that character and became a mere token of respect. Ancient Japan was largely indebted to Korea for developments of musical instruments. On the death of the Emperor Ingyo (453 A. D.), the Korean Court sent eighty musicians robed in black, who marched in procession from the landing-place to the Yamato palace, playing and singing a dirge as they went.

The oldest organised form of amusement seems to have been the *Ka-gaki*, or poetical picnic. Parties of men and women met at appointed places, either in town or country, and composed couplets, delivering them with accompaniment of music or dancing. This kind of pastime had its practical uses: it brought lovers together and soon became a recognised preface to marriage. Among amusements confined to men, cock-fighting and hunting were most affected. Large tracts of the country being still unreclaimed, deer

[1] See Appendix, note 9.

and wild-boar abounded. These were driven by beaters into open spaces, there to be pursued by men on horseback armed with bows and arrows. In the fourth century the pastime of hawking was introduced. It came from Korea: a king of that country sent a present of falcons to the Emperor of Japan, who caused a special office to be organised for the care of the birds.

Chinese annalists, writing in the third century, allege that the Japanese tattooed their faces and bodies, the positions and size of the designs constituting an indication of rank. Tattooing the body and cutting the hair were counted by the Chinese as violations of the rules of civilisation, and they offer an interesting explanation of the origin of these customs in Japan. They allege that the first rulers of that country were wandering princes of the Chou dynasty (1200 B. C.) who abandoned their patrimony in China, and migrated southwards, cutting their hair and tattooing themselves, to mark the completeness of their expatriation. The theory is quite untenable. One well-known Chinese work regards tattooing in Japan as a protection against the attacks of marine creatures of prey. But there are strong reasons to doubt whether tattooing was at any time prevalent among the Japanese proper. Possibly Chinese writers failed to distinguish between the inhabitants of the Riukiu archipelago and the people of Nippon, for tattooing of the face was never practised by the Japanese, whereas the

habit did prevail among the people of Riukiu. Another reasonable hypothesis is that tattooing was introduced among a limited section of the nation when Japan received the Malayan element of her population. At all events, in every era it was confined to the lowest classes, namely, those who bared their bodies to perform the severe labour falling to their lot.

These Chinese annalists confirm the supposition suggested by the rituals, as noted above, that crimes of larceny and burglary were very rare in old Japan. They say, also, that Japanese women were neither sensual nor jealous, which is assuredly true in modern times and seems to have been true in every age of the nation's existence. Another fact adduced in praise of the people was that they gave the law courts very little occupation. But there is an unfavourable interpretation of that state of affairs. The severity of the law, when occasion for its enforcement did arise, was terrible. If political considerations aggravated a crime, the whole family of the criminal were executed, and sometimes every member, even to distant relations, was reduced to the condition of serfdom. The people in general may be said to have been serfs with regard to the interval separating them from the upper classes. Thus, if an inferior met a superior, the former had to step aside and bow profoundly. He was further required to squat, or kneel, with both hands on the ground, when addressing a man of rank.

That custom appears to have existed from the earliest time, and cannot be said to have yet become wholly extinct.

The accounts that Chinese annalists in the third century gave of contemporaneous Japan, indicate that intercourse existed between the two countries at that remote epoch. Indeed China and Korea began at an early date to act some part in the civilisation of Japan, and the Japanese themselves have always frankly admitted that they owe many of their refinements and accomplishments to their continental neighbours. But the common belief about that matter needs modification.

One naturally expects that since a section of the original Japanese colonists arrived *viâ* Korea, they must have received some impress of that country's civilisation during their passage through it, and must also have preserved permanent touch with it subsequently. The former anticipation is largely borne out by a comparison of the two countries' customs, for they practised in common the rules that prisoners taken in war and members of a criminal's family should be reduced to slavery; that the corpses of persons executed for crime should be exposed; that the personal attendants of a high dignitary should be buried alive at his interment; that a bridegroom should visit his bride at her own house; that before engaging in war or undertaking any important enterprise, prayer should be addressed to heaven and augu-

ries drawn from scorched bones, and that festivals in honour of the deities should be held in spring, in autumn, and at the close of the year. There is here too much similarity to be merely fortuitous. But as to the relations between the two nations, they were limited for a long time to mutual raids. In the century immediately preceding the Christian era, when the Japanese had been reduced almost to helplessness by a pestilence, the first historical reference to Korea is found, namely, that an incursion of Korean freebooters took place into the island of Kiushiu, and that thousands of the invaders settled in the deserted hamlets of the plague-stricken Japanese. Japan's attention was thus disagreeably directed towards her neighbour, and when, by and by, inter-tribal disputes disturbed the peace of Korea, the Yamato rulers were easily induced to interfere. It appears, further, that Korea constantly lent assistance to the semi-savage aborigines of Kiushiu, whose subjugation long remained a difficult problem for the Japanese. Indeed, the only questions of foreign policy with which the early Japanese colonists had to deal arose out of the fact that the autochthons whom they sought to bring under their sway, received aid in the south from Korea and in the north from the Tartars. There was not much probability that Japan would become a disciple of Korean ethics under such circumstances. Hence, though Korea and China are often bracketed together as Japan's instructors,

the truth is that Korea was only a channel, whereas China was a source. Originally Korea did not stand on a much higher plane than her island neighbour in any respect, and in some her level was distinctly lower. But when she came within the range of Chinese civilisation, she began to reflect a faint light. Her record ought to have been better than it is, for she fell under the direct influence of China at a very early date. In the twelfth century before Christ, a band of Chinese wanderers found their way to the eastern region of the peninsula, and settling there, imparted to the tribe which received them forms of etiquette, principles of justice, methods of irrigation, tillage, sericulture, and weaving, and the provisions of "the Eight Fundamental Laws." Again, in the first century before Christ, a group of Chinese nobles, accompanying a fugitive prince, established themselves in the district lying nearest to Japan. And in the second century after Christ, north-western Korea was overrun by a Chinese army, and divided into four districts each under the rule of a Chinese satrap. If, then, the atmosphere of Korea had been favourable to the growth of Chinese civilisation, she should have become a well-equipped teacher for Japan at an early date. But she never showed any strongly receptive faculty. Japan had to go direct to China, and that was an immense undertaking in days when means of communication were primitive. The character that the journey bore in the recollection

of persons making it may be gathered from the writings of Chōnen, a Bonze, who, in company with five acolytes, travelled to the Court of a Sung emperor, in the year 984 A. D.: "I turn my face to the setting sun, and journey westward over a hundred thousand *li* (thirty-three thousand miles) of boundless billows. I watch for the monsoon and return eastward, climbing over thousands of thousands of wave-mountain peaks. Towards the end of summer, I raise my anchor at Chêh-Kiang, and, in the early spring, I reach the suburbs of my metropolis." Thus the journey occupied six months even in Chōnen's day. What time and toil must it have involved nine centuries earlier! The Japanese appear to have essayed it only thrice during the three opening centuries of the Christian era: first in the year 57 A. D., when envoys, visiting the Chinese court, received from the ruler of the Middle Kingdom a gold seal and a ribbon; secondly in 107 A. D., when a hundred and sixty slaves were presented for the Chinese monarch's acceptance; and thirdly in 238 A. D. These facts are quoted from Chinese history. In Japanese annals the third embassy takes the form of an armed invasion of Korea, and constitutes one of the most celebrated as well as one of the most disputed incidents of Japan's story. A female chieftain, the Empress Jingo, is represented as having organised the expedition in obedience to divine orders. Her flotilla, led by a fierce deity and protected by a

benignant god, travelled over sea on the crest of a tidal wave, and sweeping into the realm of her enemy, terrified him into unresisting submission. At the portals of the Korean palace she set up her staff and spear to stand there for five centuries, and she compelled the monarch of the defeated nation to swear that until the sun rose in the west and set in the east, until streams flowed towards their source, until pebbles from the river bed ascended to the sky and became stars, his allegiance should remain inviolate. That is the romantic and picturesque form into which the writers of Japanese history (the *Nihongi*) wove the legend four centuries later. But modern critics have discovered discrepancies which induce them to cut down the tale to vanishing proportions, and to dismiss Jingo as a myth. Their iconoclasm is probably excessive. For Chinese annalists say that, at the very time when Jingo's figure is so picturesquely painted on the pages of Japanese records, a female sovereign of Japan sent to the Court of China an embassy which had to beg permission from the ruler of north-western Korea to pass through his territory *en route* westward. Thus, although the celebrated empress' foreign policy be stripped of its brilliant conquests and reduced to the dimensions of mere envoy-sending, her personality at least is recalled from the mythical regions to which some sinologues would relegate it. The Chinese relate, it may be mentioned incidentally, that she was old

and unmarried at the time of the coming of her envoys; that she possessed skill in magic arts, by which she deluded her people; that she had a thousand female attendants, but suffered no man to see her face except one official, who served her meals and acted as a means of communication with her subjects; and that she dwelt in a palace with lofty pavilions surrounded by a stockade and guarded by soldiers.

Only three instances of direct official communication with China during the first thousand years of Japan's supposed national existence imply very scanty access to the great fount of Far-Eastern civilisation. Yet, from another point of view, these embassies are significant. For when Japan sent her first envoys to Loyang, the then capital of the Middle Kingdom, she had never been invaded by her neighbour's forces, nor ever even threatened with invasion, and in the complete absence of tangible displays of military prowess — the only universally recognised passport to international respect in those epochs — the homage that China received from the island empire bears eloquent testimony to the position the former held in the Orient. In truth she towered gigantic above the heads of Far-Eastern States in everything that makes for national greatness. The close of the third century saw the rise of the Han dynasty and the completion of the magnificent engineering works at the Shensi metropolis; works which still

excite the world's wonder and must have appeared almost miraculous in the eyes of people such as the Japanese were in that era. It is therefore surprising, that the interval between the civilisation of the two empires remained so long unbridged, and the explanation suggested by the above retrospect is that Korea proved a bad medium of transmission, and that China was almost inaccessible by direct means. Some special factor was needed to bring the real China within easier reach of Japanese observation, and that factor was furnished in the fourth century by a wave of Chinese colonists who came to Japan in search of profitable enterprises. Nothing is known about the prime cause of their migration, but the Chinese seem to have been as ardent fortune-questers fifteen centuries ago as they are to-day, and seeing that they had already exploited the northwest, the east and the southwest of Korea, the fact that they pushed on to Japan excites no surprise. A large ingress of Koreans occurred at nearly the same time. They were not voluntary emigrants, but fugitives from the effects of defeat in civil war. Their advent, however, compared with that of the Chinese, had no special importance except as illustrating Japan's freedom from international exclusiveness at that epoch.

The Chinese brought with them a compilation destined to serve as a primer to Japanese students in all ages, "The Thousand Characters," that

is to say, a book containing a selection of the ideographs in commonest daily use; and they brought also the "Analects of Confucius," which soon became, and has ever since remained, the gospel of Japanese ethics. There is no reasonable doubt that the existence of an ideographic script was known to the Japanese long before the fourth century. That conclusion is easily reached. For whatever may be said about the legend that the diagrams of Fuh (3200 B. C.) or the tortoise-shell mottling of Tsang (2700 B. C.) was the embryo of the ideograph, unquestionably the Chinese developed that form of writing as far back as the eighteenth century before Christ; and since they virtually began to overrun Korea six hundred years subsequently, and intercourse existed between Korea and Japan from a date certainly not later than a thousand years after the latter event, it is plain that both Korea and Japan must have known about the ideograph long before "The Thousand Characters" and the "Analects of Confucius" reached the Court at Yamato. But to know about the ideograph and to use it are two very different things. An alphabet, or even a syllabary, being a purely phonetic vehicle, lends itself to the transcription of any language. But ideographs, having their own inflexible sounds and their own fixed significances, cannot readily serve to transcribe the words of a foreign language which have different sounds and different significances. Suppose that

it were required to write English by means of Greek monosyllables. Such a word as "garrison," for instance, might be composed phonetically by putting together γάρ ἴς and ὄν, but if these monosyllables necessarily conveyed the meaning of "for," "strength," and "his" respectively, it would be perplexing to have to attach to their combination the meaning of "a body of troops for the defence of a fortress." That is a comparatively easy example of the task that confronted the Japanese when they attempted to adapt the ideographs of China to the uses of their own language. In fact, they did not think of making the attempt until the ideograph had been known to them as a kind of distant acquaintance for many generations, and even when the "Analects" reached them, their ambition was limited at first to deciphering the strange script. History has not thought it worth while to record how or by whose genius the ideographs were first employed as a kind of syllabary for the purpose of writing Japanese. That is what had virtually happened, however, before the fifth century. And very soon something else happened also, namely, a radical modification of the japanese language. For the more familiar the knowledge that students obtained of the ideograph, the less could they reconcile themselves to use it in a purely phonetic manner. It conveyed to their eyes a significance quite unconnected with the meaning of the Japanese word its sound conveyed to

their ears. Therefore by degrees sense took precedence of sound, and Japanese words were transcribed by means of ideographs which corresponded with their meaning, but were pronounced in a new manner, divested of all the harshness and confusing tones of the Chinese tongue. This is a wearisome subject, but some knowledge of it is essential to any one desirous of understanding the genius of the Japanese language and appreciating its unique excellence as a vehicle for translating new ideas. Suppose that a japanese wants to write the compound word "Western-jewel." In his own original language the sounds would be *nishi-no-tama*. But he takes two ideographs which in China are pronounced *see-yuh*, and having written them down in their proper sense, he reads them either *sai-gyoku* or *nishi-no-tama*, calling the former the *on*, or Chinese pronunciation — though it is really a Japanese modification of the Chinese sounds — and the latter the *kun*, or pure Japanese sound. Hence one of the results of using the ideographs was that the Japanese language acquired an alternative pronunciation: it became a dual language as to sound without changing its construction. It acquired also an extraordinary capacity of expansion, becoming the most flexible vehicle for translating ideas that the world has ever possessed. For the Chinese language, which was thus grafted on the Japanese, is not so much a collection of words as a vast thesaurus of materials

for constructing words. It is, in fact, a repertoire of forty thousand monosyllables each of which has its exact significance. These syllables may be used singly, or combined two, three, four, or five at a time, so as to convey every conceivable idea, however complex, delicate, or abstruse. The genius of man has never invented any machinery so perfect for converting thoughts into sounds. Possessors of an alphabet may denounce the ideograph as a clumsy, semi-civilised form of writing, and may accuse it of developing the mechanics of memory at the expense of the intellectual faculty. But the Chinese ideographist can oppose to such criticism the answer that as a vehicle for rendering the products of the mind the ideograph is without rival, and that, while the Anglo-Saxon has to devise a vocabulary for his scientific and philosophical developments by the halting aid of dead languages, exact equivalents for every new conception can be coined readily by the unassisted ideographic mint. The chronological sequence of this retrospect may be anticipated so far as to say that it was owing to the possession of such mechanism that the Japanese scholar found no serious difficulty in fitting an accurate terminology to the multitude of novel ideas presented to him by Western civilisation in the nineteenth century, just as it would scarcely have been possible for him to assimilate the ethics of Confucianism and the civilisation of China fifteen centuries earlier,

had he not simultaneously made this great linguistic acquisition.[1]

But, as stated above, the Japanese had long been admiring and marvelling at the ideographic script, and had long been studying it solely for the sake of the literature to which it gave access, before they succeeded in using it to transcribe their own language. That they seem to have done during the sixth century, for towards its close they began to compile the first records of their country's history, — began to reduce to writing such tales as had been handed down by tradition during the preceding twelve hundred years. A celebrated litterateur, statesman, and religionist, Prince Shotoku, and an equally celebrated Prime Minister and patron of Buddhism, Soga no Umako, essayed this maiden historiographical task. Their work did not survive, but there is no doubt that much of its contents found a place in the *Kojiki* and *Nihongi* of the eighth century, the oldest Japanese annals now extant.

Here an interesting question suggests itself. According to the most conservative estimate, China had possessed a written history for at least nine hundred years before the first Japanese envoys reached her shores. Does her history show that she knew, or thought she knew, anything about the Japanese before they introduced themselves to her notice by means of ambassadors? Of course it is quite plain that the two nations

[1] See Appendix, note 10.

must have had some intercourse prior to the opening of official relations; otherwise the Japanese envoys could not have been intelligible when they reached the Chinese Court. The question here, however, is not of Chinese history relating to a remote past. The question is, Did Prince Shotoku and Premier Umako find in Chinese history, when its pages were first opened for their inspection, any explanation of the Japanese nation's origin? It has been related that the predecessors of Japan's first mortal sovereign are declared by her historians to have been heavenly deities, and that the recorded incidents of their careers are fabulous and supernatural. Now the only islands spoken of by the early Chinese historians in terms suggesting Japan, are described as the abode of genii, the land of immortals possessing the elixir of life, a corpse-reviving drug, golden peaches weighing a pound each, timber of immense strength yet so buoyant that no superimposed weight would sink it, rare trees, a mountain plant that could be plaited into mats and cushions, mulberries an inch long, and an environment of black sea, where the waves, not driven by any wind, rose to a height of a thousand feet. At the risk of challenging a cherished faith, it is difficult to avoid the hypothesis that from these fables the compilers of Japan's first written history derived the idea of an "age of the gods" and of a divinely descended emperor. The unique qualification of Shotoku and Umako

for their task of history-making was familiarity with Chinese ideographic script and with the literature of the Middle Kingdom. Could anything be more natural, more inevitable, than that they should search the pages of that literature for information about the early ages of their nation's existence; or that they should place implicit reliance upon all the information thus acquired? A child, when it sits down to transcribe the head-lines of its first copy-book, does not think of questioning the logic or morality of the precepts inscribed there. Shotoku and Umako were in the position of children so far as Chinese historical records were concerned. From the annalists of the kingdom at whose civilised feet the whole semi-barbarous world sat, they learned that, prior to the year 700 B. C., islands lying in the region of Japan had been known as the habitation of genii and immortals, and with immortals and genii the Prince and the Prime Minister peopled the Japanese Islands.

Sinologues have shown that these primitive Japanese annals contain internal evidence of extensive reliance on Chinese sources. The posthumous names — that is to say, the historical names — given to the forty-two emperors from Jimmu to Mommu (697 A. D.), are all constructed on Chinese models; the name "Jimmu" itself is an exact imitation of the title chosen by the Toba Tartars for their remote ancestor; the warlike lady whose alleged invasion of Korea stands

out so prominently in Japan's ancient history, was evidently called after the Chinese Empress Wu, whose name and style corresponded with "Jingo." Of course, it is not implied that every event recorded in Japan's first written annals is to be counted of foreign suggestion. Domestic traditions, more or less trustworthy, are doubtless embodied in their pages, as well as reflections of Chinese prehistorical myths. But it does seem a reasonable conclusion that, among many borrowings made by Japan from China, the idea of her "Age of Gods" has to be included.

The sequence of events has been somewhat anticipated here for the sake of explaining the introduction of ideographic script into Japan, an event belonging to the second half of the sixth century. During the interval of nearly two hundred years which separated that consummation from the great wave of Chinese and Korean immigration that reached Japan in the beginning of the fourth century, marked progress had been made in many of the essentials of civilisation. The science of canal cutting, the art of fine embroidery, improved methods of sericulture and of silk-weaving were introduced by the immigrants, and the intelligent interest taken by the Government in encouraging progress may be inferred from the fact that it caused the newcomers to distribute themselves throughout the country so as to extend the range of their instruc-

tion. Some idea of the part played by these immigrants is suggested by the fact that, in the second half of the fifth century, when it was deemed advisable to re-assemble the foreign experts and organise them into separate departments, the families enrolled in the sericultural section alone aggregated nearly nineteen thousand members. By this time (450 A. D.) the policy of specially importing skilled aid direct from China had been inaugurated, and large bodies of female weavers and embroiderers were invited to settle in Japan. They taught the use of the loom so successfully that fine brocades for the palace were among the products of the time. At the same epoch the first two-storeyed house was constructed. It is strange that the Japanese, who through their embassies to the *Han*, the *Tsin*, and the *Song* Courts, must have acquired some knowledge of the splendours of the Chinese capitals as Loyang, Hsian, and Nanking, should have been content to live until the middle of the fifth century in log huts tied together with wild-vine ligatures. Such is the fact, however, and no explanation has been suggested. A little later, but still in the fifth century, the art of tanning skins was imparted by Korean immigrants and greatly developed by Chinese instruction.

In the domain of morals, the fourth century, as has been shown, brought to Japan a knowledge of the Chinese classics, and her historians claim that she then learnt the golden rule, as well as

the Confucian precepts of refraining from excess, abhorring evil and curbing the passions. They also claim that she quickly began to practise these ethical canons, and they point to the career of the Emperor Nintoku (313–399) as an example of the new morality. But Nintoku, though he displayed some of the most picturesque virtues of a ruler, was an extreme type of libertine. He crowned a long list of excesses by marrying his step-mother's daughter. Fifty years later, the Nero of Japanese history appeared in the person of Yuraku (457–459), who exiled an official in order to obtain possession of his wife, and perpetrated a wholesale slaughter of his own brothers, their children, and other members of the Imperial family. His successor (Seinei) carried out a similar massacre, and the Imperial line would have become extinct had not a child been secreted and reduced to the position of a serf in order to escape the quest of the official assassins. Buretsu, who reigned a few decades later (499–507), ranks even below Yuraku as a fierce and merciless despot, and at the same time the great families who had become depositories of administrative power behaved with the utmost arrogance, despising the laws, defying the sovereign's authority, and perpetrating all kinds of excesses. In brief, if Confucianism, and its comparatively high code of moral precepts, obtained recognition in Japan during the fourth century, its civilising influence is not to be detected in the fifth, which may

justly be called the blackest era in the history of Japanese imperialism.

Of course the moral condition of the inferior classes was not better than that of the Court. The selfish aims of religion became so paramount as to deprive it of all dignity. Among the tutelary deities added to the pantheon there were some whose attributes should have deprived them of any title to respect; others whose veneration betrayed a scarcely credible depth of superstition. An extreme example was the worship of caterpillars, which, at that epoch, infested the orange trees and the ginger vines. The changes these insects underwent were considered typical of the poor growing rich, the old renewing their youth, and men built shrines and offered sacrifices to the gods thus manifested.

Society was disfigured by class dissensions. The great families which for over a thousand years had monopolised the principal offices of State as hereditary rights, were no longer represented by one or two households; they had grown to the dimensions of clans, and their members lived on the proceeds of extortion and oppression, secured by the collective protection of the clan against inconvenient results. Profit and prosperity seem to have been the paramount motives of the era. Servants were so indifferent to the dictates of loyalty that they turned their hand against their liege lords, and wives had so little sense of family fidelity that they cheated

their husbands. Superstition had invaded every domain of life. There existed a belief that exhibitions of the divine will could always be obtained by employing some process of divination or repeating some formula of incantation. Judicial decisions were based entirely on the result of ordeal; dreams were regarded as revelations for guidance at important crises, and the necessity of avoiding pollution dictated grotesque rules of conduct. Thus the mere fact of encountering a stranger, or of coming into contact with any of his belongings, was held to cause contamination that demanded a service of purification, and a traveller was consequently required to carry a bell which he rang as he moved along, after the manner of a leper in mediæval Europe. If he boiled his food by the roadside, he exposed himself to the lawful displeasure of the nearest household, and if he borrowed cooking utensils from anyone in the neighbourhood, they had to be solemnly purified before being returned to their owner or allowed to touch any other object. Evidently inns could not exist under such circumstances, and the difficulties of travel were enormous, as everything needed for the journey must be carried by the wayfarer. A woman had to be moved into a segregated hut at the time of parturition, and a ceremony of purification, a species of "churching," was necessary before she might return to her place in society. To have been present at a sudden death was another

source of contamination, rendering a man responsible to the nearest house or hamlet, and involving elaborate rites of cleansing. It resulted that the companions of a man who fell sick by the roadside or was drowned, used generally to fly precipitately without waiting to succour or inter him, the promptings of charity and of fellowship being thus subserved to the dictates of unreasoning superstition. In short, the nation offered a striking example of well-developed material civilisation side by side with most rudimentary morality. A religion was wanted. The *Shintô* cult, after long and uninterrupted trial, a trial lasting for more than eleven hundred years, had proved itself essentially deficient in the guiding influences of a creed. Its want of any code of sanctions and vetoes, its indifference to a future state, its negative rules of conduct, its exaltation of deities whose powers were exercised for temporal purposes only — all these attributes deprived it of elevating effect upon the masses. Confucianism was powerless to correct these evils. It appealed to the intellect and left sentiment untouched. A religion was wanted, and it came in the form of Buddhism.

Chapter IV

JAPAN IN THE EARLY ERAS OF HISTORY

THE greatest event in the career of ancient Japan was the advent of Buddhism in the year 552 A. D. It is usually said that the Indian creed came officially, a copy of its scriptures and an image of Buddha having been sent to the Yamato Court by the Government of one of the Korean Kingdoms. In a sense this statement is correct, for without that ambassadorial introduction the new religion would probably have long remained a comparative stranger to the mass of the Japanese nation. But it is a fact that the doctrine had been preached in Japan by enterprising missionaries for many years before the arrival of the Korean envoy. Unsuccessfully preached, however. Buddhism owes much to its accessories, — to its massive and magnificent temples, its majestic images, its gorgeous paraphernalia, the rich vestments of its priests, and the picturesque solemnity of its services. These elements must have been absent failing the Government's sanction and support. Besides, from the first chapter

of Japanese history to the last, there is no instance of a radical reform effected, or a novel system inaugurated, without official guidance. The people's part has always been to follow; the Government's to lead. It may therefore be said with truth that Buddhism was planted officially in Japan, though a few unfruitful seeds had been previously scattered by private enterprise.

How came it that the Government showed a liberal attitude towards an alien faith? Was there genuine conviction of the excellence of the Buddhist doctrine, or did some other cause operate?

Both questions may be answered in the affirmative with reservations. The first Japanese Emperor (Kimmei) who listened to the new gospel seems to have found it mysterious, lofty, and attractive. Its doctrine of metempsychosis, its law of causation, its theory of a future of supreme rest, charmed and startled him. But the argument most potent in winning his support was the ambassador's assurance that Buddhism had become the faith of civilised Asia. Japan of the sixth century was just as ambitious to stand on the highest level of civilisation as Japan of the nineteenth. She turned to Buddhism for the sake of the converts it had already won rather than for the sake of her own conversion. At first, the attitude of the Court was tentative. When the Sovereign summoned a Council of Ministers, as was customary in those days of pa-

triarchal administration, only the premier — Soga no Iname — espoused the cause of the imported creed. The rest declared that its adoption would insult the hundred and eighty deities, celestial and terrestrial, who already had the country under their tutelage. The Emperor compromised by entrusting the image and the *sutras* (Buddhist canons) to Iname and postponing the final question of adoption or rejection.

There has never been any attempt to explain why the Soga family embraced Buddhism with such zealous constancy. Iname and his son and successor, Umako, gave to it equally steadfast support in the face of fierce opposition. Twice the Soga mansion was destroyed by the people, who believed that the conversion of the Prime Minister's house into a temple for strange deities had brought pestilence upon the land. Other excesses were committed. A nun was stripped and publicly whipped, and the image of the Buddha was thrown into a river. But these episodes did not shake the faith of the Soga family.

Soon, too, a powerful coadjutor appeared in the person of an imperial prince, Shotoku, whose figure justly occupies the frontispiece in the first chapter of Japan's moral and intellectual progress. Chiefly through his ardent patronage and extraordinary fervour of piety Buddhism became the creed of the Court and of the nobility.

Military strength also contributed aid. A statement frequently made with all the assurance

of historical conviction is that Buddhism is essentially a peaceful and adaptive creed ; that it never demolishes other faiths but rather assimilates them. That is certainly true of Buddhism in the abstract, but its establishment in Japan was not unaccompanied by a sanguinary exercise of armed force. The question of invoking Buddha's succour on behalf of a sick emperor led to a fierce conflict between the three great political parties of the era, with the result that the opponents of the foreign faith suffered defeat. They had been led by one of the ancient princely families, which occupied a high place in the official hierarchy, and now the chiefs of the family were put to death, its estates confiscated to endow the first great Buddhist temple, and its members condemned to serve as slaves in the new place of worship.

Another factor that made for the spread of Buddhism was the zeal, almost fanatical, of the empress Suiko, who reigned during the epoch of Prince Shotoku's reforms. She issued edicts enjoining the adoption of the faith ; ordered that all the princes of the blood and the Ministers of State should have images of Buddha in their possession, and conferred rank and rewards on sculptors of idols. Indeed, although the imperial ladies of Japan acted a noble rôle in her early history, their careers illustrate the truism that the emotional element of female character is a dangerous factor in state administration. During the

period of one hundred and sixty-eight years from 591 to 759, fourteen sovereigns reigned, and five of them were females. A sixth lady practically ruled though she did not actually reign. The sway of these Empresses aggregated seventy-one years, and every one of them carried her religious fervour almost to the point of hysteria.[1] They were certainly instrumental in raising Buddhism to the place of eminence and influence it occupied so soon after its arrival in Japan, and it is not surprising to find that, in the seventy-second year after the Korean ambassador's coming, the country had forty-six temples, eight hundred and sixteen priests, and sixty nuns. Neither is it surprising to find that, in obedience to *Shintô* precedents, Buddhism was drawn into the field of politics, and Buddhist priests were admitted to a share in the administration. For the extreme practice of these methods also a female was responsible. The Empress-dowager Kōken (749–758) organized a religious government distinct from the secular, issued orders for the spiritual regulation of men's lives, assisted a monk (Dokyo) to dethrone the Emperor, and, if she did not sanction, certainly failed to check, the crimes he perpetrated to prepare his own path to the throne.

Not in the history of any other country can there be found a parallel for the large support that sovereign after sovereign of Japan extended

[1] See Appendix, note 11.

to Buddhism in the seventh and eighth centuries. Innumerable temples were built at enormous expense and endowed with great revenues. Quantities of the precious metals were devoted to the casting of idols and the decoration of edifices to hold them. Arbitrary edicts were issued thrusting the faith upon the people by force of official authority.[1] It even became customary to surrender the highest posts and honours in the empire for the sake of taking the tonsure and leading a recluse life.[2] Striking testimony to the religious fervour of the Court survives in the magnificent assemblage of temples in and about Nara. Almost the whole of these were built and furnished during the seventy-five years (710–785) of the Court's residence at that place, and when it is remembered that the immense outlay required for such works had to be defrayed by taxing a nation of only four and a half millions of people, it is apparent that religious zeal completely outran financial discretion. It is a constant assertion of foreign critics that the religious instinct is absent from the character of the Japanese, but their history cannot be reconciled with such a theory.

Japanese sovereignty, as has been shown already, was based upon *Shintô*. The sovereigns — "sons of heaven" (*Tenshi*) as they were, and are still, called — traced their descent to the deities of that creed, and the essence of their adminis-

[1] See Appendix, note 12. [2] See Appendix, note 13.

trative title was that they interceded with the gods for the people they governed. All their principal traditions and temporal interests should have dictated the rejection of a creed which preached the supremacy of a new god and took no cognisance of their divine descent. It would have been in accord with the nature of political evolution that the people should have espoused the doctrines of a faith which absolved them from allegiance to their rulers, but how can the fact be explained that the rulers themselves patronised a creed which annulled their sovereign title? During the first century and a half after the introduction of Buddhism, that question does not seem to have troubled anyone in ancient Japan. If it was sometimes urged that the tutelary deities might be offended by the worship of a strange god, all manifestations of their umbrage were associated with the people's welfare, not with the sovereign's titles, and no one seems to have thought it necessary to assert the divinity of the *Mikado* against the alien theocracy.[1] When the Prime Minister, Soga no Umako, caused the Emperor Sujun to be assassinated (592 A.D.), Prince Shotoku justified the act by explaining that the sovereign's death had been in accordance with the Buddhist doctrine which condemns a man to suffer in this life for sins committed in a previous state of existence. Thus, only forty years after the introduction of Buddhism, the

[1] See Appendix, note 14.

lives of the "sons of heaven" were declared subject to its decrees. A century later, one of the Imperial Princes was ordered to commit suicide because he had struck a mendicant and clamorous priest. Only from the sufferings they inflicted on the people was the displeasure of the *Shintô* deities inferred. Twice their hostility to Buddhism was supposed to have been displayed by visitations of pestilence, and at last, during the reign of Shomu (724–748), when the enormous expenditure incurred on account of temple building and idol casting had so impoverished the people as to produce a famine with its usual sequel, pestilence, the *Shintô* disciples once again insisted that these calamities were the deities' protest against the strange faith. It was then that the great Buddhist priest Giyogi saved the situation by a singularly clever theory. He taught that the Sun Goddess, the chief of the *Shintô* deities, had been merely an incarnation of the Buddha, and that the same was true of all the members of the *Shintô* pantheon. The two creeds were thus reconciled, and as evidence of their union the Emperor caused a colossal idol to be set up, the celebrated *Daibutsu* (great Buddha) of Nara; the copper used for the body of the image representing the *Shintô* faith, the gold that covered it typifying Buddhism. This amalgamation was for the sake of the people's safety; it had nothing to do with rehabilitating the divine title of the sovereign. In the face of these facts,

is it possible to conceive that any such title ranked as a vital tenet of the nation's political creed? Must not the theory of heavenly descent be placed rather in the category of traditions which had not yet begun to assume the paramount importance subsequently assigned to them?

Thus, almost from the very outset, Buddhism received the strenuous support of the Imperial Court and of the nobles alike. Never did any alien faith find warmer welcome in a foreign country. It had virtually nothing to contend against except the corruption and excesses of its own ministers. The lavish patronage extended to them disturbed their moral balance. From luxury and self-indulgence they passed to chicanery and political intrigue, until, in the middle of the eighth century, one of them actively conspired to obtain the throne for himself. Throughout the whole course of its history in Japan, alike in ancient, in mediæval, and in modern times, Buddhism has been discredited by the conduct of its priests. But it has also numbered among its propagandists many men of transcendent ability, lofty aims, and fanatical courage. It found its way to the heart of the Japanese nation less for the sake of its doctrines than for the sake of the civilisation it introduced. Its priests became the people's teachers. They constituted a bridge across which there passed perpetually from the Asiatic continent to Japan a stream of new knowledge. To enumerate the

improvements and innovations that came to her by that route would be to tell almost the whole story of her progress.

The seventh and eighth centuries are among the most memorable epochs of Japan's history. They witnessed her passage from a comparatively rude condition to a state of civilisation as high as that attained by any country in the world, from the fall of the Roman Empire to the rise of modern Occidental nations, and they witnessed also a political revolution the exact prototype of that which has made her remarkable in modern times.

Prince Shotoku stands at the head of the movement of progress. Not only did he secure the adoption of Buddhism, but he also organised an administrative system embodying the first germs of practical imperialism, drafted a constitution and compiled the earliest historical essays. His constitution is full of interest as affording a clear outline of the ethical ideals of the time and of the polity that this singularly gifted man desired to establish : —

1. Concord and harmony are priceless ; obedience to established principles is the fundamental duty of man. But in our country each section of the people has its own views and few possess the light. Disloyalty to Sovereign and parent, disputes among neighbours, are the results. That the upper classes should be at unity among themselves and intimate with the lower, and that all matters in dispute should be submitted to arbitra-

tion — that is the way to place society on a basis of strict justice.[1]

3. Imperial edicts must be respected. The Sovereign is to be regarded as the heaven, his subjects as the earth. The heaven hangs above, the earth sustains it beneath; the four seasons follow in ordered succession, and all the influences of nature operate satisfactorily. Should the earth be placed above the heaven, ruin would at once ensue for the universe. So the Sovereign directs, the subject conforms. The Sovereign shows the way, the subject follows it. Indifference to the Imperial edicts signifies national ruin.

4. Courtesy must be the rule of conduct for all the Ministers and officials of the Government. Wise administration of national affairs has its roots in the observance of etiquette. Without etiquette on the part of the superior, it is impossible to govern the inferior, and if inferiors ignore etiquette, they will certainly be betrayed into offences. Social order and due distinctions between the classes can only be preserved by strict conformity with etiquette.

5. To punish the evil and reward the good is humanity's best law. A good deed should never be left unrecompensed or an evil unrebuked. Sycophancy and dishonesty are the most potent factors for subverting the State and destroying the people. Flatterers are never wanting to recount the faults of inferiors to superiors and depict the latter's errors to the former. To such men we can never look for loyalty to the Sovereign or sympathy with their fellow-subjects. They are the chief elements of national disturbance.

9. To be just one must have faith. Every affair demands a certain measure of faith on the part of those that deal with it. Every question, whatever its nature or tendency, requires for its settlement an exercise of

[1] See Appendix, note 15.

faith and authority. Mutual confidence among officials renders all things possible of accomplishment; want of confidence between Sovereign and subject makes failure inevitable.

10. Anger is to be curbed, wrath cast away. The faults of another should not rouse our resentment. Every man's tendency is to follow the bent of his own inclination. If one is right, the other is wrong. But neither is perfect. Both are victims of passion and prejudice, and no one has exclusive competence to distinguish the evil from the good. Sagacity is balanced by silliness; small qualities are combined with great, so that neither is salient in the total, even as a sphere is without angles. To chide a fault does not certainly prevent its repetition, nor can the censor himself be secure against error. The sure road to accomplishment is that trodden by the people in combination.

14. Those in authority should never harbour hatred or jealousy of one another. Hate begets hate, and jealousy is without discernment. A wise man may be found once in five hundred years; a true sage, hardly once in a thousand. Yet without sages no country can be governed peacefully.

15. The imperative duty of man in his capacity of subject is to sacrifice his private interest to the public good. Egoism forbids coöperation, and without cooperation there cannot be any great achievement.

Prince Shotoku spoke with the wisdom inspired by Buddhism and Confucianism. But the principles of constitutional monarchism that he enunciated so plainly were suggested by the conditions of his era. The patriarchal families which filled the principal offices of State by hereditary right, had grown into great clans.

They grasped the reality of administrative power, leaving its shadow only to the sovereign, who, cut off, on the one hand, from all direct communication with the people, was condemned, on the other, to see his authority abused for purposes of oppression and extortion. The state of the lower orders was pitiable. They were little better than serfs. The products of their toil went almost entirely to defray the extravagant outlays of the patrician clans, and if sometimes they rose in abortive revolt, their more general resource was to fly to mountain districts beyond the reach of the tax-collector. Permanent escape was impossible, however. They were sought out, and forcibly compelled to return to their life of unremunerated labour. Prince Shotoku saw that the remedy for these wretched conditions, which threatened even the stability of the throne, was to crush the power of the patrician class and bring the nation under the direct sway of emperors governing on constitutional principles. He inculcated the spirit of that most enlightened reform, but did not live to see its practical consummation.

Within a quarter of a century after his death, however, the last[1] of the great office-owning clans was annihilated, and for the first time in Japanese history the Emperor became a real ruler. This happened in the middle of the seventh century. History calls it the "Taikwa Reform."[2] A long series of changes were crowned by an edict un-

[1] See Appendix, note 16.

[2] See Appendix, note 17.

precedented in Japan. The sovereign addressed himself direct to the people, and employed language evidently an echo of Prince Shotoku's constitution. Its gist was that since the faculty of self-government must be acquired before attempting to govern others, and since obedience could be obtained only by one worthy to command, the sovereign pledged himself to behave in strict conformity with the principles of imperialism, relying on the aid of heaven and the support of the people. Tenchi, who issued this edict, may be called the father of constitutional monarchism in Japan. His fourth successor, Mommu (697–708), inaugurated his reign by a similar rescript, promising, with the help of his ancestors and the gods, to promote the welfare of his people. The interval of forty years separating Tenchi's accession and Mommu's death (668–708) may be regarded as the only period, in all the long history of Japan prior to modern times, when the sovereign was not divided from the people by nobles who usurped his authority. Mommu endeavoured to invest the issue of his edict with great pomp and ceremony, but of an essentially democratic character. The princes of the blood, the great nobles, and the chief officials were all required to attend, and the people were invited *en masse*. Then a crier read the edict aloud in four parts, and at the end of each part all present, high and low alike, were invited to signify their assent.

This remarkable chapter of Japanese history may be broadly described as a political revolution resulting from the introduction of Chinese civilisation through the medium of Buddhist priests, just as a similar revolution in recent times resulted from the introduction of Western civilisation through the medium of gunboats. The splendour and prestige of the Tang dynasty, which in the beginning of the seventh century had wrested the sceptre of China from the hands of the scarcely less magnificent Sui sovereigns, were reflected in Japan. Tenchi and Mommu modelled their administration on the lines indicated in the "Golden Mirror" of Tatsong, and the grand capital established at Nara in the beginning of the eighth century was an imitation of the Tang metropolis at Hsian.

Another feature common to the records of seventh-century and nineteenth-century progress was extraordinary speed of achievement. Just as forty years of contact with Occidental civilisation sufficed to metamorphose Japan in modern time, so a cycle of Chinese influence revolutionised her in ancient days.

In the era immediately prior to the latter change, nothing was more marked than the wide interval separating the patrician and the plebeian sections of the nation. The lower orders, as has been already stated, were reduced to a state of virtual slavery, and the upper obeyed only the law of their own interests and passions. A patri-

cian held himself defiled by mere contact with a plebeian, and marriages between them were not tolerated. Great importance attached to well-established pedigrees. During the lapse of ages and in the absence of any written records, few genealogical trees could be traced clearly through all their ramifications, and the danger of admitting some strain of vulgar blood into a family imparted special advantage to marriages between children of the same father by different mothers. Confucianism proved entirely powerless to check that abuse, or to provide any general corrective for the relations between the sexes, which were frequently subserved to degrading influences. Wives had now ceased to live apart from their husbands, but concubinage was largely practised, and marital and extra-marital relations alike were severed on the slightest pretext. A woman, however, did not recover her full freedom when abandoned by her husband or protector. She was still supposed to owe some measure of fidelity to him, and if she contracted a second alliance, her new partner often found himself exposed to extortionate demands from her former mate. Another evil practice was that powerful families trafficked in the honour of an alliance with them, first dictating a marriage, and then making it a pretext for levying large contributions on the bride's parents. Loss of affection or inclination was deemed a sufficient reason for divorcing a woman, and sometimes mere suspicion of a wife's

infidelity induced a husband to appeal to the law for an investigation, which meant that the unfortunate woman had to undergo the ordeal of thrusting her hand into boiling water or grasping a red-hot axe. Many women conceived such a dread of the married state that they deliberately chose the life of domestic servants, thus incurring the plebeian stigma and becoming ineligible for patrician attentions in any form. Even the terrible custom of *junshi*, or dying to accompany a deceased chieftain, had lost something of the discredit attached to it by the ordinance of the enlightened emperor Suinin five centuries previously. Faithful vassals still took their own lives in order to be buried near their lord's tomb, and wives and concubines followed their example, voluntarily or on compulsion. Horses also were killed to serve their masters beyond the grave, and valuables of all kinds were interred in sepulchres, as had been the habit from time immemorial. When duty to the dead was not pushed to these extremes, the survivors considered it necessary at least to cut their hair or to mutilate their bodies.

All these abuses were strictly interdicted in the reformation foreshadowed by Prince Shotoku's adoption of Buddhism and Confucianism, and embodied in a series of legislative measures during the period 645 to 708.[1] The nation suddenly sprang to a greatly higher level of civilisation.

[1] See Appendix, note 18.

Notably the style of dwellings was altered. Architects, turners, tile-makers, decorative artists, and sculptors coming from China and Korea, magnificent temples were built, enshrining images of high artistic beauty, and adorned with paintings and carvings which would be worthy objects of admiration in any age of æsthetic development. Rich nobles, at the same time, began to construct for themselves[1] mansions which already showed several features destined to permanently distinguish Japanese residences. The processes of manufacturing paper and ink, of weaving carpets with wool or the hair of animals, of concocting dyes, of preparing whetstones, of therapeutics, of compiling a calendar, and of ship-building on greatly improved lines,— all these, learned from China, were skilfully applied.

It may be noted incidentally that the growth of wealth resulting from this influx of material civilisation gave additional emphasis to the superiority of the Chinese, for they had to be placed at the head of the various bureaux of the Treasury, there being no Japanese competent to discharge such duties. Commerce also felt the expansive impulse. Men travelled from province to province selling goods; foreign vessels frequented the ports; a collector of customs and a superintendent of trade were appointed, and an officially recognised system of weights and measures was introduced.

[1] See Appendix, note 19.

Not less marked were the changes of costume. Instead of dressing the hair so as to form a loop hanging over each ear, men tied it in a queue on the top of the head. This novel fashion was due to the use of hats as insignia of official ranks. There were twelve varieties of hat corresponding to as many grades, and each was tied on with cord of a distinct colour, just as the colour of a cap-button now indicates official quality in China. Wigs had hitherto been largely used, but they were now abandoned except on occasions of special ceremonial, when they were fastened to the hat. The introduction of the queue seems to have been responsible for the first display of foppery on the part of men. It was ornamented with gold in the case of the highest officials, with tiger's hair by men of lesser rank, and with cock's feathers in a still lower grade.

The abolition of hereditary offices necessitated a thorough re-organisation of the administrative system, and it is a remarkable fact that the remodelled form remained permanent through all ages and still exists to a recognisable degree. For managing affairs in the provinces — where the great families had gradually become autocratic, not only levying imposts at will, but also appropriating to their own uses the taxes that should have gone to the Court — local governors and district headmen were appointed, and at the head of the central government was placed a department of shrines, immediately under it being

a cabinet with a bureau of councillors, two secretariats, and finally eight departments of State. A system of civil-service examination was also inaugurated. Youths desiring administrative posts had to enter one of the educational institutions then founded, and subsequently to undergo examination, though this routine might be departed from in the case of men whose fathers had deserved conspicuously well of the country. The name of a man's office now ceasing to do duty as a patronymic, the hats mentioned above became the only means of recognising rank, so that their importance grew greater, and their number gradually increased, first to thirteen and afterwards to forty-eight. But at that point the system ceased to be practicable, and certificates of grade were substituted, a method still pursued.

Great pains were taken to effect a distinct classification of the people, the general divisions adopted being "divine" (*Shin-betsu*, i. e. descended direct from the deities); "imperial" (*Kwo-betsu*), and "alien" (*Ham-betsu*), distinctions which will be more fully explained in a future chapter. A still broader division was that of *ryō-min* (noble) and *sem-min* (ignoble), the former including the *Kwo-betsu* and the *Shin-betsu*; the latter the *Ham-betsu* only. The constant tendency was to accentuate these distinctions, though it sometimes happened that men reduced to a state of indigence sold their family name and descended to the position of servants. Clandes-

tine intercourse between patrician and plebeian lovers was also not infrequent, but the law took care that the offspring of such unions should seldom obtain admission to the higher rank. It is a curious fact that the legislators of the time never conceived the possibility of a patrician lady's forming a liaison with a plebeian: they provided for the contingency of a man's succumbing to the charms of a plebeian beauty, but they made no allowance for any such weakness on the part of a nobly born woman.

Concerning the terms "noble" and "ignoble," it is not to be supposed that the former originally included only such persons as would be called "gentlemen" and "ladies" in Europe or America. In addition to the whole of the official and military elements, the *ryō-min* comprised many bread-winners who, under the more exclusive system of subsequent eras, were relegated to a lower social status. The most comprehensive definition is that only those pledged to some form of servitude stood in the ranks of the *sem-min*, all others being *ryō-min*. There were five classes of *sem-min*, the lowest being private servants, and the highest, public employés. The distinction of "military man" (*samurai* or *shizoku*) and "commoner" or "civilian" (*hei-min*) did not exist at the time now under consideration. Indeed, at this point another resemblance is found between the "Restoration" in the seventh century and that in the nineteenth cen-

tury; for just as the modern government signalised the fall of feudalism and the transfer of administrative power to the sovereign by abolishing the *samurai's* privilege of wearing two swords, and thus, in effect, abolishing the *samurai* himself, so when the *Taikwa* Government put an end to the system of hereditary offices in 645, it collected all the implements of war from their owners and stored this great assemblage of swords, bows, and arrows in magazines. The bearer of arms thus lost whatever prestige had previously attached to that distinction. But such a state of affairs could not be permanent in a country where the control of the indigenous inhabitants still continued to demand constant exhibitions of force. Before forty years had elapsed, another emperor (Temmu) organised a definite military establishment and inaugurated a course of training in warlike exercises; and shortly afterwards, an empress (Jito) introduced conscription. At first only twenty-five per cent of the youths throughout the realm were required to serve, but at the beginning of the eighth century the number was increased to one in every three. All the *ryō-min* appear to have been held liable for this service. Thus a man engaged one day in hawking merchandise or dyeing cloth might find himself, the next, bearing arms and receiving military training. A regiment was organised for every five rural divisions, and from among these regiments certain sections were

selected to guard the imperial palace, while others were told off for coast duty, three years being the term of service in either case. Had this system remained in operation, there would have been no such thing as a feudal Japan, nor would the profession of arms have become the special right of a limited class. But the course of events may be anticipated so far as to say that, before the lapse of a century after the introduction of conscription, military duties became hereditary, and Japanese society assumed a structure which continued without radical change until the revolution of recent times.

It will readily be conjectured that, turning to China for models, Japan did not fail to make the family system a fundamental feature of her reforms. A family might consist of a single household, or it might comprise several households; but every family, whatever its dimensions, had to have one recognised head, to whom the subordinate households were related by blood. Thus, since the subordinate households generally included wives, concubines, children, and servants, the head of the whole family sometimes represented a clan of a hundred or a hundred and fifty persons. This position of headship could not be occupied by any save a legitimate scion, but a female was eligible, provided she had attained the age of twenty, and was not actually a widow, a wife, or a concubine. Remembering the marked laxity of the marital relation prior to

the era of this new system, one is astonished at the courage with which such sweeping changes were effected, and at the complacence with which they were received. For whereas previously men had been free to adopt any rule of succession they pleased, and the legitimacy of an heir had scarcely been considered, it now became necessary that the successor to the headship of a family should be legitimate before everything: adoption being declared preferable to the choice of a bastard. But the higher the social grade of the family, the greater the latitude in this respect. It does not appear that the eligibility of an imperial concubine's son was ever questioned, and in the case of a noble belonging to one of the three first grades, a child born out of wedlock might succeed, failing legitimate sons or grandsons. Adoption, too, must be exercised within the limits of blood relatives, any departure from that rule being criminal.

Five families living in the same district were combined into an administrative group, which elected its chief and delegated to him a general duty of supervision. The group (*hō*) was responsible for the payment of its members' taxes. In those days it was not an uncommon incident for a family to abscond *en masse*, in the hope of avoiding extortionate imposts. The group had to trace the absconders, and discharge their fiscal liabilities during their absence.

The marriageable age for youths was fifteen, and

for maidens thirteen, but the consent of parents or grandparents had to be obtained. Already the preliminaries of wedlock were entrusted to a go-between, and the degree of order introduced into these previously disorderly connections is shown by the fact that, so soon as the concurrence of the two families had been secured by the go-between, a "marriage director" was duly appointed, his function being to secure conformity with every legal requirement. A girl of the upper classes had to consult the views of an extensive circle of relatives — parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts, brothers, and parents-in-law — but this rule was relaxed in proportion as the social grade descended. Etiquette forbade that a wedding should be celebrated during the illness or imprisonment of a parent or a grandparent, and an engagement became invalid when the nuptial ceremony had been capriciously deferred for three months by the man; or when he had absconded and remained absent for a month; or when, having fallen into pecuniary distress in another part of the realm, he failed to return within a year; or when he had committed a serious crime.

Concerning divorce, a theme much discussed by critics of Japan's ethical systems, the family of a wife were entitled to demand her freedom in two cases: first, in the event of deliberate desertion, extending to three years when there had been offspring of the marriage, and two years where the union had been childless; secondly, in

the event of a husband's incurring pecuniary ruin in a distant place, and failing to come home for five years if he had left a child, and for three if there was no child. But against this exceedingly brief list of a wife's rights, there is a long catalogue of the husband's. He was entitled to divorce his wife if she did not bear him a male child, if her habits were licentious, if she failed in her duty to her parents-in-law, if she indulged a love of gossip, if she committed a theft, if she betrayed a jealous disposition, or if she suffered from an obnoxious disease. The more important a man's social position, the greater his obligation to secure the assent of his own parents and his wife's before putting her away, but in the lowest classes scarcely any impediment offered to separation. Sentiment, however, interposed a curious veto. If a wife had contributed money for the funeral of a parent-in-law, or if a husband occupying a low social grade at the time of his marriage had subsequently risen to a higher, or if a wife had no home to which she could retire after separation, then divorce was held to be inadmissible. The one redeeming feature of the wife's position was that all the property, whether in money, chattels, or serfs, brought with her at the time of her marriage, had to be returned on divorce. Her enforced subservience to her parents-in-law, and her obligation to patiently endure the presence of one or more concubines, if her husband so willed it, were often cruel bur-

dens in her daily life. A concubine acquired by this new legislation the status of a second-grade relative, but the system was purely morganatic, the law peremptorily refusing to recognise two wives.

The edicts of the era embodied an excellent code of ethics. Such virtues were inculcated as industry, integrity, frugality, simplicity of funeral rites, diligent transaction of business even during periods of mourning, and the exclusion of mercenary motives from marriage contracts. Further, the new democratic principle extracted from the Confucian cult — the principle that the throne must be based on the good will of the nation at large, and that full consideration should be given to the views of the lower orders — found practical expression in the erection of numerous petition-boxes wherein men were invited to deposit a statement of grievances demanding redress, and in the hanging of bells which were to be rung when it was desired to bring any trouble of a pressing nature to official notice. Codes of laws were also framed.

An interesting fact shown by this legislation is that the economical principle of a common title to the use of land received recognition, practically at all events, in ancient Japan. Looking as far back as history throws its light, it is seen that the Crown's right of eminent domain was an established doctrine, but that, during the era of patriarchal government, large tracts of land

came into the possession of the great governing families, and remained their property until the fall and virtual extermination of the last of these families in the early part of the seventh century. The Emperor then becoming, for a time, the repository of complete authority, resumed possession of all private estates, and exact rules for the distribution and control of land were embodied in the new codes. The basis of the system then adopted was the general principle that every unit of the nation had a natural title to the usufruct of the soil. It was therefore enacted that to all persons, from the age of five upwards, "sustenance land" should be granted in the proportion of two-thirds of an acre to each male and one-third to each female. These grants were for life, and the grantee was entitled to let the land for one year at a time, provided that, at his death, it reverted to the Crown. Redistribution every sixth year was among the provisions of the code, but the difficulties of carrying out the rule soon proved deterrent. Lands were also conferred in consideration of rank. Imperial princes of the first class received two hundred acres; those of the second class, one hundred and fifty acres; those of the third, one hundred and twenty-five acres, and those of the fourth, one hundred acres. In the case of the ten grades into which officialdom had now been divided, the grants ranged from twenty to two hundred acres, and females belonging to any of

these grades received two-thirds of a male's share, the consideration shown to them being thus twice as great as that extended to women of inferior position. Finally, land was given in *lieu* of official emoluments; the Prime Minister's salary being the produce of one hundred acres; that of the second and third Ministers, seventy five acres each; and that of other officials ranging from two to fifty acres. Land, indeed, may be said to have constituted the money of the epoch. It was given in *lieu* not only of salaries but also of allowances, — even post-stations along the high-roads being endowed with estates whose produce they were expected to employ in providing horses, couriers, and baggage-carriers for Government use. It need scarcely be added that meritorious public services were rewarded with estates, granted sometimes in perpetuity, sometimes for two generations only.

A special arrangement existed for encouraging sericulture and the lacquer industry. Tracts of land were assigned to families for planting mulberry or lacquer trees in fixed quantity, and such land might be leased for any term of years or sold with official permission; neither did it revert to the Crown unless the family became extinct. But any land left uncultivated for three years was regarded as forfeited, and had to be resumed or re-allotted.

The exact amount of taxes levied at various eras in Japan has always been difficult to ascer-

tain, for not only did the method of assessment vary in different provinces, but also the legal limits were seldom the real limits. In the period now under consideration, the records show that, for purposes of local administration, a tax in kind, representing five per cent of the gross produce of the land, was levied, and that the expenses of the central government were defrayed by means of miscellaneous imposts on all the principal staples of production, as silk, fish, cloth, etc., and by a *corvée* of thirty days' work annually from every male between the ages of twenty-one and sixty-six years, and fifteen days from every minor. An adult's labour might be commuted by paying three pieces of hempen cloth. These labourers were not hardly treated in the comparatively rare cases where they chose to work rather than to commute. During the dog days, they were entitled to rest from noon to four P. M., and night work was not required. Rations were provided, and in wet weather they were not expected to work out of doors. If a man fell ill while on *corvée*, due provision was made for his maintenance, and in case of death he was coffined at official expense, and the body was either given up to any relative or friend on application, or cremated and the ashes buried by the wayside. There were, of course, various exemptions from forced labour. Females or persons suffering from illness or deformity were invariably excused, and holders of official rank

obtained exemption, not only for themselves, but also for their fathers and sons, and even for their grandfathers, brothers, and grandsons, in the highest grade.

These imposts were evidently onerous. The *corvée* alone, representing one-twelfth of a man's yearly labour, would have been a heavy burden without the addition of five per cent of the gross produce of the land and a contribution of general staples equal, probably, to at least two or three per cent more. Mercy was shown, however, in the event of defective crops. The remissions on that account were regulated by a schedule: the land tax being remitted if the shortage amounted to fifty per cent of the average yield, the miscellaneous taxes if the shortage reached seventy per cent, and the *corvée* when there was a loss of eighty per cent. The five-families group spoken of above was responsible for the cultivation of all maintenance estates. Thus, if a man fled from the pursuit of justice or the burden of his taxes, the group to which he belonged took care of the land for three years and discharged his fiscal liabilities, at the end of which time the land reverted to the State in the event of his continued absence.

The Codes contained provisions with regard to inheritance also. The system was regulated by strict rules of descent, and not only land, but also serfs, houses, and personal property were included in the estate. The eldest son, his mother,

and his step-mother received two parts each ; the younger sons, one part each ; the daughters and the concubines, half of a part each. Here, too, the general principle applicable to woman's rights was observed, namely, that the female ranked as a minor, or as one half of an adult male. A mother's rights, however, did not descend to her daughter. Thus, whereas a son's children of either sex represented their father in the division of the family estate, a daughter's children did not represent their mother. On the other hand, property belonging to a woman at the time of her marriage was not necessarily absorbed into the family estate of her husband. Neither did these rules apply to land granted for public services. Such land had to be divided equally among all the children, male and female alike. Other rules existed, but enough has been said to show the general character of the law of inheritance.

Wills were not considered in the code ; they became almost superfluous instruments in the face of such precise legal provisions. It does not follow, however, that estates were invariably divided in the manner here indicated, or that the law interdicted all liberty of action in such matters. If the members of a family agreed to live together and have everything in common, they were exempted from the obligation of observing the rules of inheritance ; and, further, a parent was entitled, during his lifetime, to distribute the property among his children in accordance

with the dictates of his own judgment. He also possessed the power of expelling a profligate son from the paternal home, and such expulsion carried with it disinheritance.

The "serfs," to whom several allusions have already been made, had certain exceptional rights. A public serf was entitled to receive from the State as much maintenance land as a free-man, and a private serf received one-third of that amount. But a difference existed in the nature of the tenure; for whereas a free-man might let or even sell his land with official consent, a serf was obliged to cultivate it himself. On the other hand, the serf paid no taxes and enjoyed exemption from forced labour.

The Government exercised no scrutiny into any transactions of sale unless lands or serfs were concerned. But it endeavoured to control transactions of borrowing. Priests and nuns were forbidden to lend money or goods on interest; officials to borrow from any one in their own department; and imperial relatives, of or above the fifth grade, to make loans in the districts of their residence. Interest was to be collected every 60 days, the rate not exceeding one-eighth of the principal; but after 480 days had elapsed, the interest might become cent per cent, though no accumulation exceeding twice the principal was recognised. Loans of rice and millet must not run for more than a year. If, at the expiration of that time, the debtor could not discharge

his liability, his property might be sold, and its proceeds supplemented by his own serfdom, if necessary. Official attempts were often made to prevent the mortgaging of land, but permanent success never attended them.

The people's chief occupation in those days was agriculture. It cannot be said, however, that the choice of farming pursuits was specially suggested by the nation's aptitudes. The genius of the Japanese seems to find most congenial exercise in all manufacturing efforts that demand skill of hand and delicacy of artistic taste. But as yet no considerable demand for the products of such skill had arisen, whereas the cultivation or reclamation of lands gradually freed from the occupation of the stubborn autochthons, being always an urgent necessity, was correspondingly encouraged by the Government. Rice was the chief staple of production, and the methods of the rice-farmer differed little from those now in vogue, though not until the middle of the ninth century did the practice commence of hanging the sheaves on wooden frames to dry. Hitherto they had been strewn on the ground during the process, the fate of the grain thus depending wholly on the weather's caprices. Rice is not a robust cereal. Deficiency of rain in June, a low range of thermometer in July and August, storms in September, — any one of these common incidents largely affects the yield. After the introduction of Buddhism, when fish and flesh could

not be eaten without violating the sanctity of life, inclement seasons must often have compelled men to choose between the laws of the creed and the dictates of nature. It was appropriate that the female rulers who patronised Buddhism so passionately, should make special efforts to save their subjects from the temptation of the alternative; and accordingly the Empresses Jito (690–696) and Gensho (715–725) took steps to encourage the cultivation of barley, Indian corn, wheat, sesamum, turnips, peaches, oranges, and chestnuts. Tea, buckwheat and beans were added to this list during the first half of the ninth century, and it is thus seen that Japan possessed at an early date all her staple bread-stuffs, except the sweet potato and the pear. The Empresses mentioned above and the Emperors of their era devised several measures to encourage agriculture,—such as granting free tenure of waste land or bestowing rewards on its cultivators, making loans of money for works of irrigation, and munificently recognising the services of officials in provinces where farming flourished, or punishing them when it fell into neglect, — and adopted precautions against famine by requiring every farmer to store a certain quantity of millet annually. In all ages the Japanese Court showed itself keenly solicitous for the welfare of the people, and its solicitude was fully shared by its *protégés*, the Buddhist priests. If at one time an Emperor Tenchi (668–671) remitted all taxes for three years, until signs of returning

prosperity were detected, or an imperial prince (Yoshimune, 803) invented the water-wheel, at another Buddhist prelates of the highest rank travelled about the country, and showed the people how to make roads, build bridges, construct reservoirs, and dredge rivers. Stud farms and cattle pastures were among the institutions of the era, so that, on the whole, agriculture must be said to have reached a tolerably high standard.

But beyond doubt the most noteworthy development of all took place in the domain of art. The student is here confronted by one of the strangest facts in Japan's story. There are ample reasons for concluding that when Buddhism was introduced in the middle of the sixth century, both pictorial art and applied art were at an altogether rudimentary stage in Japan. There was considerable skill in the casting, chiselling, and general manipulation of metals for the purpose of decorating weapons of war and horse-trappings, or manufacturing articles of personal adornment, but artistic sculpture and painting were virtually unknown. Yet, before the lapse of a hundred years, both had been carried to a high standard of excellence, sculpture specially reaching a point never subsequently surpassed, — a point which, under ordinary circumstances, should have marked the zenith of a long orbit of evolution. It is customary to dismiss this enigma by attributing the best achievements of the time entirely to Korean and Chinese immigrants, and certainly

many artists from the neighbouring empires crossed to Japan at that era.[1] But there are almost insuperable obstacles to complete acceptance of such a theory. The subject will be referred to in another place. Here it must be dismissed by noting the extraordinary impulse of progress that gave to Japan, in a brief space of time, sculptors of noble images, architects of imposing edifices, and painters of grand religious pictures. Lacquerers might be added to the category; but the processes of lacquer manufacture are said to have been known in Japan as far back as the third century before Christ, and it is possible that before the Emperor Kotoku (645–654) ordered his coffin and his crown to be lacquered, fine examples of that kind of work may have been produced. There is no guide here. But it is known that, in the second half of the seventh century, lacquer was so highly prized that lacquered articles were received in payment of taxes, and also that, at about the same epoch, red lacquer, five-coloured lacquer, aventurine lacquer, and lacquer inlaid with mother-of-pearl were produced.

In the absence of any form of literature the Japanese people remained entirely without intellectual education during the first thousand years of their existence as a nation. That is their own account of themselves, and there are no sufficient grounds for a different version, difficult as

[1] See Appendix, note 20.

it is to believe that they should have derived so little advantage from the neighbourhood of a people like the Chinese, whose literary talents were already well developed when the earliest Japanese colonists crossed from the continent. The coming of two Korean literati to the Court of the Emperor Ojin at the close of the third century of the Christian era is regarded as the event that inaugurated the study of books in Japan. These two men were naturalised, and having received official recognition as instructors, settled, one in the province of Yamato, the other in that of Kawachi, and there founded, respectively, the families of *Bunshi* and *Shishi*, whose scions, during several generations, enjoyed a monopoly of literary teaching. Little is known as to the nature of the instruction imparted by them, but it was doubtless confined to the ideographs and to the exposition of some elementary Chinese works. Generally, however, the philosophy of the Middle Kingdom then began to unfold its pages, and before the close of the fifth century a tolerably intimate acquaintance with the Chinese sages' writings had been acquired by the Court and by the heads of the Government, though the great mass of the people still remained in profound ignorance. Thenceforth a constant ingress of literati took place from the neighbouring continent, especially after the introduction of Buddhism, and, in the sixth century, the medical science of the Chinese, their

processes of divination and their methods of almanac-compiling, constituted new inducements to literary studies. But such a thing as a school did not exist until the time of the Emperor Tenchi (668–671), when the first institution of the kind was opened in the capital, to be followed, ten years later, by a university and by a few provincial seminaries. The curriculum of this university represents the ideal of literary attainment in its era. There were "four paths" of essential learning — the Chinese classics, biographies, law and mathematics. Caligraphy and music were taught independently. The "classics" were divided into three sections: the first, or "major classic," consisting of the Book of Etiquette and the Biographies; the second, or "middle classic," comprising the Book of Poetry and two Books of Etiquette; and the third, or "minor classic," including the Book of Changes and the Maxims. These were the bases of the regular course of lectures, but students of literature were required to study also the Classic of Filial Piety and the Analects of Confucius. It will be perceived that Buddhism had no place in this sphere of study. Yet, at the close of the seventh century, when the university had four hundred and thirty students, and when it represented the only high educational institution in the Empire, Buddhism as a religion had already absorbed the attention of all the nation's leaders. It is, indeed, a remarkable fact of

Japanese history that religion was thus excluded from the range of education. Services were performed at the university and at the schools in honour of ancient men of erudition, and Confucius was deified under the title of *Bunsen-o;* but while sovereign, princes, and nobles were possessed by passionate zeal for the propagandism of Buddha's creed, and were impoverishing themselves and the nation to build magnificent temples and furnish them with thousands of costly images and quantities of gorgeous paraphernalia, they were equally persistent in telling the people that filial piety, as exemplified in the Chinese records, should be the basis of all action,[1] and that the whole code of every-day ethics was comprised in the teachings of Confucius and Mencius. Perhaps if Buddhism had possessed a literature of its own, the field might not have been exclusively occupied by the Chinese classics. But Buddhism has no literature, or to speak more accurately, no literature intelligible to laymen. Its scriptures are couched in language which specialists only can understand, and by sermons and oral teaching alone are its precepts communicable to the public. *Shintô*, on the other hand, has no code of morals at all. Thus Confucianism presented itself as the sole working system of ethics available for educational purposes in ancient Japan.

It is easy to appreciate what a perplexing problem presented itself to Japanese publicists

[1] See Appendix, note 21.

and educationalists in the eighth century. The foundations of the national polity rested on the *Shintô* tenets that the sovereign was the son of heaven, that his intervention with the gods was essential to the well-being of the people, and that every unit of the nation must look up to him with the profoundest veneration. Confucian ethics, as expounded by Mencius, taught that the sovereign's title to rule rested entirely on his qualities as a ruler; that the people's welfare took precedence of the monarch's prerogatives, and that filial piety was the highest of all virtues. Buddhism placed at the head of its scripture the instability of everything human; compared each series of worldly events, however great the actors, however large the issues, to a track left by a ship upon the wide ocean, and educated a pessimistic mood of indifference to sovereign and parent alike. Can anything less consistent be conceived than the conduct of a government which employed all its influence to popularise the religion of Buddha, which appealed to *Shintô* shrines for heavenly guidance in every administrative perplexity, and which adopted Confucianism as an ethical code in the education of youth? The difficulty, in the case of Buddhism and *Shintô*, was to some extent overcome, as already shown, by a clever adjustment which recognised incarnations of Buddha in the principal *Shintô* deities. But it was not overcome in the case of the Confucian philosophy, nor is there any room

to doubt that the troubles which beat against the Throne, and nearly overthrew it, from the eighth century to the nineteenth, were in some degree the outcome of ideas derived from the Chinese Classics.

Chapter V

THE JAPANESE IN THE NARA EPOCH

THE restoration of the administrative power to the Emperor in the middle of the seventh century, which was marked by the great legislative measures already spoken of and by the re-modelling of the government on Chinese bureaucratic lines, prefaced a period generally known as the "Nara, or Heijo, epoch" (709–784), because the town of Nara, then chosen as the imperial capital, had the distinction of being the first city to hold that rank independently of changes of sovereign. Hitherto it had been the custom for the Emperor and the heir apparent to reside in different places, and of course there grew up about the palace of the prince material interests and moral associations opposed to a change of habitation. Hence on his accession to the throne, he usually transferred the capital of the empire from the place occupied by his predecessor to the site of his own palace. In addition to this source of frequent change, it happened occasionally that the residence of the Imperial Court, and therefore

the capital of the empire, was moved from one place to another twice or even thrice during the same reign, the only limit set to all these shiftings being that the five adjacent provinces occupying the waist of the main island, and known as "Gokinai," were regarded as possessing some prescriptive title to contain the seat of government, Yamato being especially honoured in that respect. A long list might be compiled of places distinguished by imperial residence during the early centuries, notable among them being Kashiwara, the capital of the Emperor Jimmu; Naniwa (now Osaka), that of the Emperor Nintoku; Otsu, that of the Emperor Tenchi; and Fujiwara, that of the Emperor Temmu. It must be noted, however, that in those ages of comparative simplicity and frugality, the seat of government was not invested with attributes of pomp and grandeur such as the haughtier conceptions of later generations prescribed. The sovereign's mode of life differed little from that of his subjects, and the transfer of his residence from place to place involved no costly or disturbing effect. But as civilisation progressed, as the population grew, as the business of administration became more complicated, as increasing intercourse with China furnished new standards for measuring the interval between ruler and ruled, and, above all, as class distinctions acquired emphasis, the character of the palace assumed magnificence proportionate to

the imperial ceremonies and national receptions that had to be held there. By the beginning of the eighth century, this development had reached a stage which necessitated a permanent capital, and Nara, thenceforth called Heijo (the castle of peace), was chosen.

The capital established there was on a scale of unprecedented size and splendour, and a lady's name — that of the Empress Gemmiyo — is fitly associated with this tribute to outward appearances. The plan of the city was taken from that of the Chinese metropolis. There were nine gates and nine avenues. The palace stood in the northern section and was approached from the south by an avenue, broad and perfectly straight, which divided the city into two exactly equal halves, the "left metropolis" and the "right metropolis." All the other streets ran in perfect parallelism with this main avenue, or at right angles to it.[1] Seven sovereigns reigned in succession at Nara. Some partial attempts were made from time to time to revive the old custom of changing the Court's residence on a change of emperor, but the unprecedentedly grand dimensions which Nara had quickly assumed, and the group of magnificent temples that had sprung up there in a brief period, constituted a metropolitan title which could not be ignored.

The Nara epoch owes its prominent place in history chiefly to the extraordinary zeal

[1] See Appendix, note 22.

shown by the Court and the great nobles in promoting the spread of Buddhism. During the seventy-five years comprised in the epoch, no less than seven of the grandest temples ever seen in Japan were erected; a multitude of idols were cast, among them a gigantic *Daibutsu;* colossal bells were founded, and all the best artists and artisans of the time devoted their services to these costly works. The mania reached its zenith in the reign of the Emperor Shomu (724–749), whose religious zeal was supplemented by a love of pomp that led him to lavish great sums on rich costumes, expensive sports, and handsome edifices, and by superstition so profound that whenever any natural calamity or abnormal phenomenon occurred, he caused religious services to be performed at heavy cost. In addition to the large demands of the central treasury, salaries and emoluments for the leading officials were assessed on a liberal scale; the Prime Minister's pay being equal to the earning capacities of three thousand families, that of the second Minister to the earnings of two thousand families, and so on in a descending rate.

The agricultural classes, who were the chief tax-payers, began to show themselves unequal to this strain. It was also appreciated that the theory of State ownership of land, applied according to the provisions of the *Taikwa* and *Taihō* legislation, produced a demoralising effect upon the farmer, since he did not care to improve land which might

be transferred to some one else in six years, and was at best secure for only one generation. The Government, therefore, began to recognise the principle of private ownership, and also to lend to agriculturists in spring such funds or articles as were required for the cultivation of their farms. In fact, the policy pursued by the State was a curious mixture of desire to reform and inability to retrench. Resolute efforts were made, for example, to improve means of communication by constructing roads and organising post-stations; but, at the same time, officially guarded fences and barriers were established at commanding points, the necessity of fixing the tax-payer immovably in one place being considered more important than the expediency of bringing new markets within reach of his produce. It was in the reign of this same Emperor (Shomu) that men witnessed the spectacle of the great Buddhist prelate Giyogi travelling about the country, attended by a large body of priests and acolytes, who, under his direction, began the building of bridges, the making of roads, the digging of canals and reservoirs, the improvement of harbours and the erection of embankments in various places where special engineering skill was needed. Inspired by such an example, the people flocked from all sides to complete these works, and the Government showed its appreciation of Giyogi's labours by redoubling its patronage of his creed.

The lower orders did not derive much benefit

from these improved facilities of communication. Government officials alone were allowed to use the horses kept at the post-stations and to demand a night's board and lodging in the houses of wealthy persons *en route*. Common folk had still to carry their food with them when they made journeys, and to cook it wherever they might. In recognition of that necessity, it became habitual for a man's friends to present to him a little bag containing two or three flints and steels when he contemplated a journey. In exceptionally favourable conditions the wayfarer found shelter for the night under some friendly or charitable roof, but in general he bivouacked at the foot of a tree, or, if he was a man of rank travelling with a retinue, his attendants constructed a hut for his accommodation.[1] Death from starvation on a journey was a not infrequent occurrence. To such a fate labourers especially were exposed who had been summoned to some remote place on *corvée:* they perished on their way home. The humane Empresses Gemmyo and Genshō (708–723) sought to abate these evils by establishing stores of grain at intervals along the principal highways, and by requiring wealthy people in the provinces to make arrangements for selling rice to travellers. A few years subsequently, an edict, issued at the suggestion of a Buddhist priest, required that fruit-trees should be planted on both sides of the main road in the five metropolitan

[1] See Appendix, note 23.

provinces, and there can be no doubt that the noble rows of pines lining some of the public avenues of Japan were a later outcome of the custom thus inaugurated in the middle of the eighth century.

Architectural improvement was another conspicuous feature of the Nara epoch, and, like most incidents of Japanese progress, it owed much to official influence. A tiled roof seems to have been the chief ambition in the early stage of development, but the first attempt to construct one for the palace of the Empress Saimei (655–661) proved a failure, and it was not till the time of her successor, the Empress Jito, that the Government found itself able to issue an order for the tiling of all the State offices. There is difficulty in believing that during an era when applied art made such remarkable strides as it did in the second half of the seventh century, the bulk of the people were content to inhabit rudely built hovels with thatched or shingled roofs, and that even the imperial princes lived in houses of timber from which the bark had not been removed. It is true that to be a prince in those days did not necessarily imply the possession of wealth or even of a moderate competence, for sometimes the sovereign had to make special allowances of rice and salt to his relatives to save them from absolute want. But the opulent as well as the indigent were alike satisfied with dwellings of the lowliest character until the

Nara epoch, when a new conception of the proper attributes of an empire's capital presented itself to Shomu's privy councillors. They addressed to the Throne a memorial insisting that the nation needed a metropolis worthy of the sovereign's residence and of the receptions his Majesty had to give to foreign embassies, and they argued that though houses with roofs of thatch and shingle had the sanction of ancient custom, such a method of construction could not be reconciled with any principles of sound economy. The result of these representations was an edict ordering that the houses of all officials of the central government from the fifth grade of rank upwards, as well as those of all wealthy commoners, must be tiled and painted red as expeditiously as possible, and soon afterwards the system was extended to the provinces. To estimate the significance of such an edict it has to be remembered that a change of generation usually meant the construction of a new house in that era. The religious prejudice against pollution was so strong that a house where a death had taken place was considered unfit for further occupation, and was either pulled down and rebuilt or abandoned altogether. The edict, therefore, had an immediately practical interest for those to whom it was addressed. As to the seemingly capricious order about red paint, its evident purpose was to put an end to the use of timber carrying the bark, and of course the

choice of red was dictated by an instinctive knowledge of the law of complementary colours. The beautiful harmonies commonly seen in Japan between rich vermilion pagodas, or deep-red columns of temples, and their environment of green woods, had its origin in the desire to make religious edifices an object lesson to architects of private residences. But the project failed signally. Rough timbers, indeed, soon ceased to be used for building the houses of the upper classes, but no one could ever be induced to have his private residence of the prescribed tint. Red, in short, came to be regarded as a religious colour, and that fact alone would have sufficed to prevent its employment by lay architects, for in every age the Japanese have persistently refused to admit the structural or decorative style of sacred edifices into the domain of private architecture.

It is, perhaps, by considering the costumes of the Nara epoch that the clearest conception is obtained of the refinement of the nation's life at that time, and of the source from which it derived its new civilisation. Speaking generally, the garments worn by men differed much less from those of modern Europe than did the garments of the Japanese when they first became known to the Occident. The essentials were a tunic-like coat and trousers, the former having comparatively tight sleeves, and being girt at the waist by a belt made either of Korean brocade

or of embroidered silk studded with plates of jade. Two other garments were added — one over the trousers and one over the coat — but they had nothing of the loose flowing character usually associated with Japanese dress. They were, in fact, copied with scarcely any change from the Chinese robes of the epoch, and had their dimensions been fuller, they would be identical with the Chinese robes of the present day. We thus conclude that, just as the men of modern Japan have copied the costumes of the Occident in adopting its civilisation, so the men of ancient Japan imported Chinese robes with Chinese systems of morality and administration.

Law after law was enacted regulating the exact measurements of these various articles and, above all, their quality and texture. In early times, the best material available was manufactured from the paper mulberry or from hemp; but, by and by, grass cloth and cotton fabrics came into use, and, in the fifth century, sericulture and silk-weaving were successfully practised. The silk then produced was of very inferior quality, and though several fine varieties — as sarcenet, figured silk, brocade, and so on — were soon obtained, they served for ornamental purposes rather than for every-day wear. But in the Nara epoch, neither the most elaborate fabrics that the home loom could turn out, nor yet the rare silks and brocades brought from China by the Buddhist priests, who made it a duty to familiarise

Japan with all the best products of Asiatic skill, were deemed too costly for purposes of personal adornment. This extravagant tendency received its first impulse in the middle of the seventh century when, as part of the reforms and re-organisations consequent on the abolition of the patriarchal system and the assumption of administrative autonomy by the Emperor, the custom of employing hats to distinguish official grades was imported from China. The designing of these hats constituted quite a legislative occupation, and the story of the changes they underwent is bewildering. One excellent sovereign[1] seems to have been reduced to a state of despairing recklessness by sumptuary problems, for he issued a decree declaring that everybody might wear anything he pleased. Other monarchs, however, grappled with the question, and it was not until the beginning of the eighth century, just before the commencement of the Nara epoch, that the many-hued hats of China were exchanged for a sober head-gear of uniform colour — silk gauze covered with black lacquer — better adapted to the artistic instincts of the Japanese. It must not be imagined that these finally evolved hats were intended to discharge any head-covering function; they were as innocent of such purpose as is the extravagant head-gear of fashionable ladies in the *fin-du-siècle* Occident. The hat, supposed to have the shape of a

[1] See Appendix, note 24.

cicada, was poised on the top of the head much as an insect might have perched there. At the time when this fortunate simplicity was attained as to one article of costume, there were no less than eighteen ranks of princes, thirty principal ranks of officials, twenty supernumerary ranks, and twelve orders of merit. All these had to be differentiated by points of apparel, and as there were three costumes for each rank — the ceremonial costume, the Court costume, and the ordinary uniform — the task to be discharged by the bureau of etiquette was to devise two hundred and sixteen varieties of dress. Necessarily the pettiest details had to be enlisted in this phalanx of diversities. White trousers were always *de rigueur*, but a pure white girdle might be used by the Prince Imperial only: other princes were obliged to have embroidered or figured girdles, and the girdles of lower dignitaries had to be of designated colours. Jewels and jade necessarily adorned the belts of the upper ranks of princes. But that essentially Chinese fashion did not long survive in Japan. It has always been against the instinct of the Japanese male to use jewels of any kind for purposes of personal adornment. Socks were made of silk brocade — another extravagance ultimately abandoned in favour of white cotton-cloth — and the feet were thrust into black lacquered shoes with up-tilted toes. As for the colour of the upper garments, the general rule was that the deeper the colour, the higher

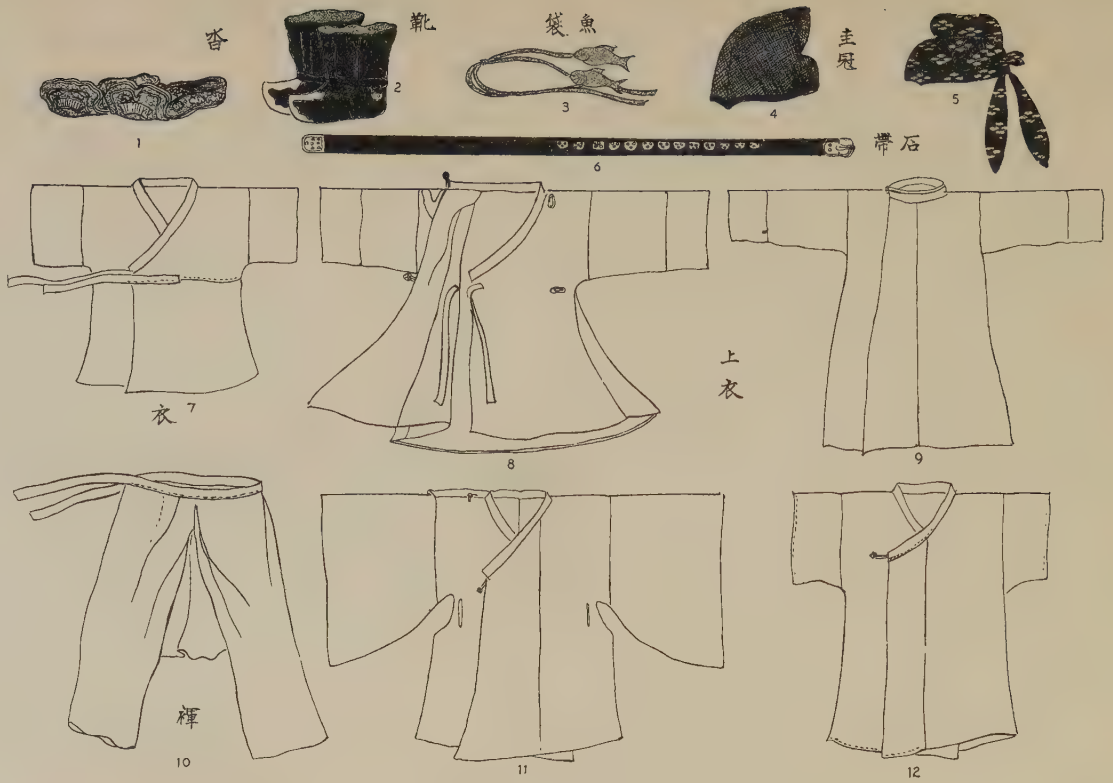
the rank — purple, Indian red, crimson, cherry-red, blue, mulberry, leaf-green, grass-green, and so on, in fixed gradation. Unclassed officials and commoners had to wear yellow, and servants were clothed in black. Any departure from these rules in the sense of trespassing upon the costume of a higher rank, exposed the delinquent to severe punishment. Even the number of knots on the strings of an amulet-bag was a matter of regulation, and a high official, when in full dress, carried in his hand a flat piece of ivory, fourteen or fifteen inches long, in imitation of the tablets used by Chinese statesmen for writing orders or reports.

Ladies, too, were denied the privilege of choosing fashions for themselves. It has already been shown that, in very early times, both men and women wore strings of beads on their necks, arms, and legs, and there is evidence that each sex used to fasten spring-flowers or autumn sprays in the hair by way of ornament. Why and when these customs were abandoned there is nothing to show, but it is certain that, in the Nara epoch, ladies were required to use ornaments of gold, silver, or jade for their heads, and that these ornaments generally took the shape of the natural objects for which they were substituted, though sometimes forms from the Chinese grammar of art were chosen, — as highly conventionalised dragons and clouds, tortoises and waves, or Dogs of Fo and peonies. Legislators had fur-

ther the temerity to order the binding up of a lady's hair,[1] which she had hitherto worn hanging loose, or merely bound by a fillet at the back of the head. But the authority of law proved abortive at this point: ladies laughed at a threat announced in an edict of the Emperor Temmu (673–686) that every long-haired female should be called a sorceress. In other respects, however, they had to bow to the law. High rank conferred on a lady the privilege of wearing her own locks; if she was below the sixth grade she had to have a wig. Her garments[2] appear to have been shaped like those of the other sex;[3] a fact which must have simplified matters considerably for the officials of the bureau of etiquette, and which was consistent with the important part acted by women in all affairs of religion and State. The Emperor Temmu (673–686) seems to have considered it desirable that the differences between the habits of the sexes should be still farther obliterated, for he forbade women to ride on horseback with both feet in one stirrup, as had hitherto been their wont, and ordered them to straddle their steeds in male fashion.

The etiquette of official intercourse naturally received much attention side by side with these minute regulations about costume. In the reign of the fanatically religious Empress Suiko (593–

[1] See Appendix, note 25. [2] See Appendix, note 26.
[3] See Appendix, note 27.



GARMENTS OF THE NARA EPOCH.

1. Shoes.
2. Boots.
3. Tassel with pendant.
4. Head-dress.
5. Head-dress.
6. Jewelled belt.
7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12. } Tunics and Trousers.

628), it had been enacted that any one entering the palace gate must kneel on both knees, place his hands on the ground, bow his head, and in that attitude crawl across the threshold. Twenty years later, this prostrate method of approach was abandoned; to be again revived shortly afterwards, and again finally abandoned towards the close of the seventh century. The Japanese, in fact, adopted Chinese customs sometimes faithfully, sometimes tentatively. They were disposed to take them wholesale, but equally disposed to reject them after trial. They did not then cover the floors of their rooms with the clean soft mats that subsequently came into universal use. Boards were employed, and kneeling on boards being irksome, a standing salutation was substituted. Matting, cushions, or skins were spread on the ground to serve as seats, but by high officials a large four-legged dais, *à la Chinoise*, was used. This solid, handsome article of furniture, with lacquered legs and edges, metal mountings, and brocade-rimmed matting on its surface, served as a kind of chair of state. Its occupant did not kneel with his feet under him, as subsequently became the fashion; he sat tailor-wise. Another Chinese custom — that of joining the palms of the raised hands and clapping them by way of greeting to a superior — came into vogue and was practised for a considerable time. But being associated with the standing system of etiquette, this hand-clapping courtesy

ceased to be allowed after the introduction of mats. For chairs and mats were incompatible; the former necessarily disappeared when the latter were adopted, and since a matted floor plainly invited a kneeling salutation, the palm-striking obeisance finally disappeared except as preface to a prayer before shrines or in temples.[1] When an inferior official met a superior on the road, the former had to step aside and stand still until the latter passed, and had further to kneel with his hands on the ground whenever he desired to make a remark. The same rule applied to youths and elders irrespectively of rank, and if an official of a class lower than fifth, or a commoner, happened to be riding on horseback when he encountered a superior, he had to dismount and stand aside.

The food of the people during the Nara era consisted of rice, steamed or boiled, millet, barley, fish of various kinds (fresh or salted), sea-weed, vegetables, fruit (pears, chestnuts, and minor varieties), and the flesh of fowl, deer, and wild-boar. Strenuous efforts were made by the Court to enforce the Buddhist commandment against taking life, but the nation steadily eschewed that kind of fanaticism, and even the priests themselves did not obey their own laws. *Sake* — a fermented liquor made from rice — and tea, which had recently been imported from China, were the chief beverages, and soy (a sauce made from

[1] See Appendix, note 28.

beans) and vinegar served for seasoning purposes. In this context reference may be made to a detail which constitutes another point of likeness between the adoption of foreign civilisation in the seventh and eighth centuries and its adoption in modern times. Milk was suggested to the Emperor Kōtoku (645–654) by a Korean envoy as a useful article of medicinal diet, and it found so much favour that at the beginning of the eighth century a "milk section" was established in the medical bureau, and an imperial edict required that butter should be sent to the Court periodically from all parts of the empire. The fancy did not live more than a hundred years, nor was it revived until the eighteenth century. The lower orders enjoyed none of these luxuries. A poem of the period shows that instead of fish, salt was their principal relish; instead of rice, barley or millet their staple article of diet; and instead of clear *sake* they drank the lees of the brewer's vat diluted with water.

In a peculiarly constructed[1] wooden storehouse attached to the celebrated temple Totai-ji there is preserved a collection of objects from the palaces of the Emperors and Empresses that reigned during the Nara epoch. It would plainly be a false conclusion to regard these things as specimens of the furniture and utensils ordinarily used at the Court of Japan in the eighth century. Had they not been rare and choice in their time,

[1] See Appendix, note 29.

they would not have been thought worthy of preservation. But they certainly bear witness to the refinements of the era and to the affinities of its civilisation, just as the ornaments of a French *salon* in the sixteenth century bear witness to the graces of life at that time and to the Italian influences that then pervaded French æstheticism. Many of the Totai-ji treasures are of Chinese *provenance;* a few are Indian, and a still smaller number, Persian. China's large contribution might have been expected, for if the Japanese in the seventh and eighth centuries regarded their continental neighbour as the source of everything that was best in matters legislative, ethical, philosophical, political, and literary, they would naturally look to her also for standards of social refinement. The story these relics tell is that the occupants of the Nara palace had their rice served in small covered cups of stone-ware, with *céladon* glaze — these from Chinese potteries, for as yet the manufacture of vitrifiable glazes was beyond the capacity of Japanese keramists; — ate fruit from deep dishes of white agate; poured water from golden ewers of Persian form, having bird-shaped spouts, narrow necks and bands of frond diaper; played the game of *go* on boards of rich lacquer, using discs of white jade and red coral for pieces; burned incense in censers of bronze inlaid with gems, and kept the incense in small boxes of *Paullownia* wood with gold lacquer decoration — these of Japanese make, — or in

receptacles of Chinese *céladon;* wrote with camel's hair brushes having bamboo handles, and placed them upon rests of prettily carved coral; employed plates of nephrite to rub down sticks of Chinese ink; sat upon the cushioned floor to read or write, placing the book or paper on a low lectern of wood finely grained or ornamented with lacquer; set up flowers in slender, long-necked vases of bronze with a purple patina; used for pillow a silk-covered bolster stuffed with cotton and having designs embroidered in low relief; carried long, straight, two-edged swords attached to the girdle by strings (not thrust into it, as afterwards became the fashion); kept their writing materials in boxes of coloured or gold lacquer; saw their faces reflected in mirrors of polished metal, having the back *repoussé* and chiselled in elaborate designs; kept their mirrors in cases lined with brocaded silk; girdled themselves with narrow leather belts, ornamented with plaques of silver or jade and fastened by means of buckles exactly similar to those used in Europe or America to-day; and played on flutes made of bamboo wood. In short, the Shoso-in relics introduce us to a people imbued with a strong taste for the refinements of civilisation, but not yet possessed of artistic and technical skill sufficient to supply their own wants.

In this Nara epoch a legislative attempt was made to restrain all illicit intercourse between the sexes, but it does not appear that the slightest

success attended the experiment. There is nothing to show that virgin purity was less esteemed in a Japanese maiden of gentle birth than it has ever been esteemed by any nation under any system of ethics. But the recognition extended to concubinage necessarily produced a confusion of principles. From the sovereign down to the artisan, a man's extra-marital relations were limited only by his means and opportunities. The obligation of sexual fidelity rested on the woman alone, and constituted her whole code of morality. She valued virtue, not for virtue's sake, but as part of her duty to some one man either in *esse* or in *posse*, and she discharged that duty with remarkable steadfastness whether as a maiden, a mistress, or a wife. But it is easy to see that since society did not scrutinise with any severity her relation to the man claiming her affection, and frowned on her only when she betrayed him, her first concessions to love were often made without much ceremony. The custom of leaving a wife to reside in her parental house had long ceased in practice, but its principle found expression in a rule that when a man married, he must construct special apartments for his bride's accommodation.[1] Another curious canon was that until a girl became betrothed, she must never speak of herself by her family name, and that when lovers parted, the string of the man's under-garment was tied to

[1] See Appendix, note 30.

that of the woman, with a promise that the knot should never be loosened till they were reunited. It was also by her betrothed that a maiden's hair, which in girlhood flowed over her shoulders, was for the first time bound with a fillet. This last custom survives in a degraded form until the present day, as will be seen when the time comes to speak of public fêtes in which professional dancing-girls (*geisha*) act a prominent part.

Japan's borrowings from China were of course liberal in the sphere of literary culture. Having no books of her own, she depended entirely on the library of her neighbour. Compared with the barrenness of her intellectual realm, that library opened up to her an immensely fruitful area of science, philosophy, and *belles lettres*, and there would be no grounds for surprise had she lost herself in its multitudinous paths. But if we except the engrossing claim that Confucianism made upon her attention, the chief effect produced upon her by Chinese literature was to set her to writing poetry. Throughout the century culminating at the zenith of the Nara epoch, she abandoned herself almost deliriously to that occupation. To turn a couplet deftly became the test not merely of literary education but even of administrative competence. There is difficulty in conveying to the mind of a Western reader any exact idea of the habit that grew out of this poetic extravagance. If at a banquet given by

the sovereign of England to his Ministers and leading civil and military officials, or at a reception by the President of the United States in the White House, pens and paper were handed round, and all the guests were invited to spend several hours composing versicles on themes set by Mr. McKinley or King Edward, and further, if the pastime were repeated again and again, day after day, until the construction of couplets became an engrossing national occupation, such a state of affairs would represent with tolerable accuracy the custom that began to come into vogue in the middle of the seventh century, — a custom which produced its best results from a literary point of view a hundred years later in the Nara epoch, and continued in an even increasing degree through several generations.

But although this poetic mania is here associated with the introduction of Chinese literature, it did not derive its metric inspiration from that source. The Japanese system of versification is their own,[1] nor did their poets borrow anything from the treasures of Chinese literature. It is a system radically different from the Chinese system; radically different from the system of any other country, Eastern or Western. Uniquely in this one path they ignored their neighbour's influence, and wrote unrhymed lines which derived their poetic character solely from the rhythmic beat of a fixed number of syllables, five followed by

[1] See Appendix, note 31.

seven, seven followed by five, in changeless alternation. What Chinese intercourse did was to supply a medium for transcribing these stanzas, and to suggest the custom of composing them as a pastime at social *réunions*. The art itself had long existed in Japan, but from the middle of the seventh century it became a polite accomplishment. The Japanese stanza defies translation in any other language. It is a verbal melody which cannot be transposed; cannot be played on a foreign instrument. There is virtually no such thing as versified narrative; no subject is treated continuously in varying phases. In Occidental poetry the cadence of the verse is the accompaniment of the idea; in Japanese poetry, the idea is set to the cadence. The Greeks by a laboured organisation of strophe, antistrophe, and epode, strove to impart to their chorus harmonic as well as metrical value. The Japanese, by a regular alternation of syllabic chords, succeeded in combining the effects of music and metre. The embodied idea is seldom more than a mere suggestion; the whisper of a thought pervading the melody. The music is everything. To seek in the productions of such an art high displays of dramatic imagination, is as idle as to render these snatches of music into the rhymed verses of Western metrical art. To form a true conception of Japanese poetry one must read it in the original.

It is easy to understand that in an age when the passion for verbal melody attained such pro-

portions, dancing also must have been in wide favour. There is no Japanese music that will not serve as accompaniment for the Japanese stanza, and the stanza, in turn, adapts itself perfectly to the fashion of the Japanese dance. The law of the unities seems to have prescribed that the cadence of the stanza should melt into the lilt of the song, and that the measure of the song should be worked out by the "woven paces and waving hands" of the dance. That is the inevitable impression produced by Japanese poetry, Japanese music, and Japanese dancing. The affinity between them is so close that it is difficult to tell where one begins and the other ends.[1] The music of words, the music of motion, and the music of song rank equally in popular appreciation. Of course Buddhist music is not included in that description. Buddhist music is a wail, a threnody. It makes no appeal to the natural disposition of the Japanese, and the vogue it obtained from the Nara epoch onwards largely contributed to the growth of a dangerous form of pessimism. The tendency of the Japanese has always been to accompany their feasting and merry-making with music, versifying, and dancing. At the time now under consideration, there was the "winding water fête," when princes, high officials, courtiers, and noble ladies seated themselves by the banks of a rivulet meandering gently through some fair park, and launched tiny

[1] See Appendix, note 32.

cups of mulled wine upon the current, each composing a stanza as the little messenger reached him, or drinking its contents by way of penalty for lack of poetic inspiration. There were also the flower festivals — that for the plum-blossoms, that for the iris, and that for the lotus, all of which were instituted in this same Nara epoch — when the composition of couplets was quite as important as the viewing of the flowers. There was further the grand New Year's banquet in the "hall of tranquillity" at the Court, when all officials from the sixth grade downwards sang a stanza of loyal gratitude, accompanying themselves on the *koto*.[1] Specially remarkable was the *utagaki*, which in this epoch assumed the dimensions of a grand spectacular display. Hundreds of youths and maidens, wearing blue silk robes with long red girdles, assembled at the palace gate and danced in the presence of the Emperor, the men and women in separate rows; and thereafter continued the performance through the city, singing in union some simple stanza, such as

> Crystal-born river,
> Hakata, thy jewelled stream
> Flows through ten thousand
> Times ten thousand ages, pure.

It was an era of refined, effeminate amusements. Wrestling had now become the pursuit of professionals. Aristocrats engaged in no rougher

[1] See Appendix, note 33.

pastime than archery, polo, a species of football, hawking and hunting. Everybody gambled. It was in vain that, from the time of the Empress Jito (694–696), edicts were issued against dicing (*sugoroku*). The vice defied official restraint.

Chapter VI

THE HEIAN EPOCH

(*End of the Eighth to the Middle of the Twelfth Century*)

IT has been shown that after the fall of the patriarchal system of government the administrative power reverted to the sovereign, and that a series of vigorous reforms were undertaken on the lines of Chinese civilisation. But the Emperor did not long remain autocratic, nor did many of the reforms prove permanent. Mommu's (697–707) democratic edict, declaring that the throne rested on the people, had scarcely been acclaimed by the nation when the Fujiwara[1] family began to wield power which soon assumed extraordinary proportions.

This family was founded by Kamatari. He came into notice by compassing the destruction of the last of the patriarchal clans (the Soga), and fate, with her usual irony, decreed that he himself should be the founder of a clan beside whose usurpations those of the Soga, or any other Japanese clan, look insignificant. Kamatari traced his descent back to the days of Jimmu, but even if

[1] See Appendix, note 34.

the reckoning commence with himself in the seventh century, the Fujiwara are sufficiently antique. There has been no break in the continuity of their line. They were the repositories of the administrative power for nearly five centuries. Their name is borne by ninety-five out of the hundred and forty-five families constituting the Japanese court nobility. Their daughters enjoyed through all ages, and still enjoy, a kind of prescriptive title to be the Emperors' consorts.[1] Their sons established a hereditary right to fill the highest offices in the State. The history of Japan, during the twelve hundred years covered by her written annals, may truly be described as the history of four families, the Fujiwara, the Taira, the Minamoto, and the Tokugawa.

It is usual to adopt as lines of division the Nara epoch, the Heian (Kyōtō) epoch, the Kamakura epoch, and the Yedo epoch, — a classification based on the fact that each of these places was in turn the seat of administrative authority. But the course of political change is more intelligently indicated by taking for landmarks the successive usurpations of the four great families. The Fujiwara governed through the Emperor; the Taira, the Minamoto, and the Tokugawa may be said to have governed in spite of the Emperor. The Fujiwara based their power on matrimonial alliances with the Throne; the Taira, the Minamoto, and the Tokugawa based theirs on the

[1] See Appendix, note 35.

possession of armed strength which the Throne had no competence to control. There another broad line of cleavage is seen. Throughout the Fujiwara era the centre of political gravity, though shifted from the sovereign to the Court nobles, remained always in the Court. Throughout the era of the Taira, the Minamoto, and the Tokugawa, the centre of political gravity was transferred to a point altogether outside the Court, the headquarters of a military feudalism.

One fact has always to be remembered in connection with the usurpations of these families: their ancestors were not ordinary subjects. The Fujiwara traced their origin to the era of gods. The progenitors of the Taira and the Minamoto were sons of Emperors reigning at the commencement of the ninth century. The Tokugawa were a branch of the Minamoto. If a broad survey of Japanese history indicates that the sanctity derived by a sovereign from his divine lineage contributed to the stability of his throne only in so far as it constituted a charter of power for the nominal, but really usurping, agents of his will, the same history indicates that those agents were themselves scions of the Imperial stock.

In the year 794 the Imperial capital was transferred from Nara to Kyōtō[1] by order of the Emperor, Kwammu. It has been conjectured that one of the chief objects of the change was to separate religion and politics. The extrav-

[1] See Appendix, note 36.

agant patronage bestowed on the Buddhist priests during the Nara epoch had educated in them a spirit of arrogance which Kwammu saw the necessity of checking. Some colour is lent to this theory by a fact, independently interesting, namely, that Kwammu worshipped the "heavenly King" with offerings of burnt sacrifices, thus apparently setting up a new supreme ruler and a new method of propitiating him. But that incident of his career probably indicates nothing more than a close study of Confucianism, which couples worship of Shang Ti, a shadowy "Supreme," with worship of ancestors, nor can any hostility to Buddhism be attributed to a monarch whose zeal in building and endowing Buddhist temples is historical. The more rational explanation of the transfer of the capital to Kyōtō is that it was part of a scheme for the better centralisation of administrative power.

At the close of the eighth century the three great difficulties of the time were the growth of provisional autocrats who ignored the mandates of the Throne; the continued revolt of the autochthons, and the reappearance of the system of hereditary office-bearers.

Less than a century had sufficed to nullify many of the *Taikwa* and *Taihō* reforms described in the last chapter. One great purpose of those reforms had been to give practical force to the principle of the Throne's eminent domain and to make the land the chief source of the State's

income. But the reckless expenditure of the Court and of the patrician class necessitated such heavy rates of taxation that the farmers had to borrow money and rice from officials or Buddhist priests, and since they had nothing to offer by way of security except their lands, it resulted that the temples and the nobles began to acquire great estates of which the Government hesitated to resume possession, as prescribed by law, and the agricultural population gradually fell into a condition of practical serfdom. So miserable was their plight that many preferred to embrace the status of slaves, and others turned to highway robbery and piracy. The Court, absorbed in ceremonial observances, elaborate pastimes, and superstitious extravagances, made no serious effort to check these abuses, or to assert its authority over the provincial magnates, who generally took the precaution of allying themselves with some of the prominent families in the capital. Gradually both the provincial magnates and the metropolitan nobles began to openly defy the restrictions imposed by law upon the bearing of arms, attached to their persons large guards of sword-girt soldiers, and maintained autocratic state not much inferior to that of the Court itself. The sovereign might not venture to deprive such men of the administrative posts held by them, and thus the old vice of hereditary office-bearers again came into practice, while, at the same time, the administrative im-

potence resulting from such anarchy encouraged the autochthons to vigorous revolt in the north.

These were the conditions with which Kwammu had to deal when he ascended the throne towards the close of the eighth century. The *Taikwa* and *Taihō* reforms had failed in certain important respects, and it is not difficult to detect the reason of their want of success. The system they introduced was, on the one hand, incompatible with the ends they were intended to compass, and, on the other, encouraged the tendencies they were designed to eradicate. The administrative principles of the Tang dynasty which the reformers copied, were so permeated with the spirit of pomp and ceremony; the functions of each office conferred such privileges and distinctions on its holder; the whole body of officialdom, wide as were the intervals between its various grades, was so far removed from the mass of the plebs, that irresistible forces became operative for the resurrection of the patriarchal rights which the fall of the Soga family had buried. Tenchi appreciated that his reforms conld never be permanent unless he radically changed the status of the plebs. But the means he devised for that end — probably the only means within his power — were quite inadequate, and he does not seem to have perceived that the immense access of dignity and importance gained by the administrative class under the

Chinese system, must surely revive the ambitions which had proved so irksome to his predecessors. He himself sought to better the condition of the commoners by remitting their taxes, but his successors paid little attention to that important point, and even if the exotic system had not tended to widen the distance between the two sections of the nation, the crushing fiscal burdens imposed on the lower orders must have produced that result. Kwammu, following him at an interval of nearly two centuries, showed equal vigour of purpose, but, for the same reasons, produced an equally ephemeral impression upon the abuses he sought to remedy. He commenced, as stated above, by transferring the capital to Kyōtō, and building it on a scale that educated in the minds of the people an overwhelming conception of the might and majesty of the Court. He then undertook to separate religion and politics by removing all priests from administrative posts, and he essayed to check the nation's extravagant expenditures on Buddhism by interdicting the building of temples without imperial permission. He forbade the seizure of lands for debt. He abolished offices that had been created for the sake of their occupants, and he ruthlessly removed all incompetent officials. To deal with the northern rebels, he ordered the eight provinces watered by the river Tone — namely, the *Bando* section of Japan — to organise each a body of from 500 to 1000 men, the sons of local

administrators and ex-officials,[1] and he directed that they should be constantly trained in military arts. He made a bold effort to free himself from the interference of the great families which were again beginning to usurp the governing power. He essayed to get into close touch with the people, as his great-grandfather, Tenchi, had done. He tried to thrust aside the provincial autocrats and to bring the lower officials within the range of direct responsibility. He exhibited magnanimity[2] rare in any record. In short, he ranks as one of Japan's three greatest sovereigns, — Tenchi, Kwammu, and Godaigo, — yet he left no permanent mark upon his time, except, perhaps, the subjugation of the northern rebels, — the Yezo, — whose revolt, continuous during twenty-two years, was finally quelled by his generals after an eight years' campaign. It was partly Kwammu's misfortune, largely his fault, that so far from giving any financial relief to the lower classes, he imposed upon them a heavier burden of taxation than ever; for to the inevitable outlays caused by the long war against the Yezo, he added large expenditures for the building of temples in spite of his professed desire to check such extravagance, — and still larger for the indulgence of his passionate love of hunting, a mania that led him to organise no less than one hundred and forty hunting excursions during his reign of twenty-five years.

[1] See Appendix, note 37. [2] See Appendix, note 38.

Kwammu's reign deserves this somewhat detailed notice because it marks the parting of the ways in mediæval Japan. His was the last really resolute struggle made during three and a half centuries to stem the influences that were plainly tending towards the substitution of bureaucracy for imperialism, the subordination of the Throne to the nobility.

Extraordinary importance attached to rank under the system introduced from China. Without attempting to explain the elaborate classification prescribed and strictly observed, it will suffice to say that the privilege of *entrée* to the "hall of purity and freshness" in the Palace was confined to officials of a certain grade and their sons, and could scarcely be obtained by any length of service or display of merit in a lower grade. Thus arose a broad division of the patrician order into "palatials" (*denjo-bito*) and "groundlings" (*chige-bito*), and so sternly was the distinction preserved that the latter stood to the former in a relation not much superior to serfdom.[1] The power and perquisites attaching to the higher offices were proportionately great, and since it thus became worth while to purchase the patronage of the leading dignitaries at the cost of almost any service, there grew up a large body of fortune-seekers who occupied a position of vassalage towards their patrons. The Emperor nevertheless remained the nominal fountain

[1] See Appendix, note 39.

of all rank and office, and His Majesty's favour was courted not solely by displays of poetising skill or administrative ability, but also by the more elementary device of female influence.

There could be only one Empress. To that high dignity, therefore, not many aspired. But no limit existed as to the number of ladies having the *entrée* of the Imperial bed-chamber, and since any one of these *nyogo* (imperial dames), or *koi* (ladies of the wardrobe), as they were called, might become an "Imperial Resting Place" (Myasudokoro), if she had the good fortune to bear a child to the sovereign, or might attain the splendid title of "national mother" (Kokubo) if her son was nominated heir apparent; and since, even in the absence of any such incident, she might hope to win her Imperial master's favour by other means, the great nobles vied with each other to get their daughters or sisters into the palace. Some sacrifice had to be made for the purpose. The lady was required to have a guardian prepared to defray all the expenses of her apparel and paraphernalia, and to superintend her personal affairs. Without a guardian a girl's prospects were hopeless, and the same was true of a boy. However noble his birth, he ceased to be an object of consideration if, on the death of his parents, no man of position and means undertook responsibility for him.

But if the general body of the nobles were allowed to compete for their daughters' admission

to the Imperial chamber, the Fujiwara family took care that the post of Empress should be reserved for ladies of their own lineage. That was their great political device. By progressive exercises of arbitrariness they gradually contrived that the choice of a consort for the sovereign should be legally limited to a daughter of their family, five branches of which were specially designated to that honour through all ages, and were consequently distinguished by the name *Go-sekke* (the five assistant houses). When a son was born to a sovereign, the Fujiwara took the child into one of their palaces, and on his accession to the Throne, the particular Fujiwara noble that happened to be his maternal grandfather became Regent of the Empire.

It is necessary to understand this term "Regent." Prior to the Fujiwara usurpations, the first subject in the Empire had been the Prime Minister (*Daijo Daijin*). But the Fujiwara's method of procedure demanded an office with still greater potentialities. Their plan for retaining the supreme power in their own hands was not to allow the sceptre to be held by an Emperor after he had attained his majority, or, if they suffered him to figure as sovereign during a few years of manhood, they compelled him to abdicate at the moment when his independent aspirations began to impair his docility. For purposes of administration in these constantly recurring minorities a new office was required,

and towards the close of the ninth century the post of *Kwampaku* (Regent) was created and made hereditary in the Fujiwara family, as the office of Prime Minister had already become. The Regent continued to officiate even when the sovereign was a major. He stood between the Throne and the nation. Every official communication must pass through his hands before reaching the Emperor. Thus the authority of the *Mikado* (sublime gate) practically passed to the Fujiwara.[1]

If the responsibility of restoring the evil system of hereditary office-holding in the capital rests with the Fujiwara, the abuse, it must be admitted, had never been fully abolished in the provinces. An attempt to abolish it was made, but practical experience suggested that in the administration of remote regions, the interests of the central government, as well as those of the people, were best served by officials having permanent associations with the localities where their duties lay. Hence a provincial governor (*Koku-shu*), himself commissioned by the Court, received authority to appoint and remove district headmen (*Gun-shi*). But his nominees were generally creatures of his own, as was natural, and thus the whole province gradually passed beyond the control of the capital. In vain the Court tried to enforce its authority by means of "high constables" (*chimbunshi*) and inspectors (*ansatsushi*). These offi-

[1] See Appendix, note 40.

cials were unable to assert themselves against the Governors and District Headmen acting in collusion, and it was therefore deemed expedient to make the two last mutually independent by restoring its hereditary character to the office of Headman. The expedient did not achieve its purpose. No expedient could have been serviceable under the conditions that existed; namely, powerlessness on the Court's part to give effect to its mandates, exceeding imperfection of communications, and large opportunities for profitable dishonesty. The Court had long ceased to possess any military force of its own. Having no standing army, it relied for protection solely on guards temporarily drafted from the provincial levies. The nation's perception of this weakness might have been postponed had not the rebellion of the autochthons in the north occurred. But the subjugation of these semi-savages defied the resources of the Court for twenty-two years, and was effected at last by the troops of the Bando provinces whom the Emperor Kwammu had caused to be organised. Here, then, was an object lesson not to be misinterpreted. The power of the sword obviously lay with the provinces, and the Court nobles showed their appreciation of the fact by cementing alliances with the Bando captains. Now the State derived its revenue chiefly from taxes levied on the land, and if a provincial governor reported that drought, tempest, or inundation had impaired or destroyed

the tax-paying capacities of the farmers, no trustworthy means existed of verifying the report, for an imperial inspector could either be thwarted with impunity or shown a course more profitable than sincerity, and, failing those expedients, a defaulting governor could count on the protection of some great magnate in the capital with whose family he was connected. The Court was thus gradually stripped alike of its authority and of its revenues.

This page of history deserves attention, for it lays bare the foundations of the feudal system destined to come into existence three centuries later, and to stand intact for eight hundred years. Closely connected with that system is the land question. Japanese rulers, though their practice tended to the adoption of the single tax, do not appear to have been guided by any economical principle in dealing with this problem. Their fundamental idea was to bring a maximum area of land within the range of the tax-collector. It was always a recognised rule, however, that lands granted as official emoluments or in recognition of public merit should be exempted from taxation. Hence hereditary office involved perpetual tenure of untaxed land, and every claim established on the Court's favour by great families meant a further reduction of the taxable area with a correspondingly increased impost on the remaining lands. These abuses were well illustrated at the commencement of the Heian epoch.

The Emperor Saga (810–825) conferred an estate of "fifteen thousand houses" on the Fujiwara family, and made large grants to princes, princesses, Court ladies and nobles; and a few years later, the Emperor Seiwa (859–876) so greatly extended the system that twenty-eight kinds of tax-free estates were officially catalogued, including temple lands, musicians' lands, school lands, and so on. Hence, during the first forty years of the Heian epoch, the rate of taxation for those remaining liable was doubled, and before the close of the ninth century each farmer was paying to the central government one-eleventh of the gross produce of his rice-land, in addition to a *corvée* of thirty days' labour annually. Further, in many instances the provincial governors levied independent taxes on behalf of Court magnates and imperial relatives with whom they had special relations. The Court itself possessed estates chosen in the most fruitful parts of the empire, but these resources did not suffice for the support of the rapidly growing number of Imperial princes, and it became necessary to give them family names so that they might lay aside their princely titles, and be enabled to take office in the capital or the provinces. Thus, in the year 814, the name of "Minamoto" was conferred on four princes, and in 835 the name of "Taira" on a fifth, the provinces of Kazusa, Hitachi, and Kōzuke being assigned for the support of the former, who

thenceforth ruled there as governors, while districts in the south were similarly allotted to the Taira family. In this way the foundations of the feudal system were firmly laid, and the ephemeral reforms directed against hereditary offices and perpetual tenure of land, ceased to be even nominally effective in the capital and the country alike.

This fall from the administrative and economic standards set up by the sovereigns Tenchi and Kwammu can scarcely be called retrogression, for in truth the nation had never lived up to such standards: they had been from the first incompatible with the state of its intelligence. And if, on the other side of the account, there stands to the credit of the Heian epoch much progress in the refinements of civilisation, it was a civilisation which tended rapidly to moral degeneration, and must have produced fatal consequences had it not been happily checked in the twelfth century by the evolution of a robust though comparatively rude militarism.

It is often said of the Japanese that they are conspicuously indifferent to religion. If by religion is meant belief in the supernatural, and in the constant interference of supernatural beings in the affairs of every-day life, then such a saying cannot be reconciled with the story of the Heian epoch. Perhaps it should be explained here that the term "Heian epoch" is used chronologically in the sense of the interval between the

close of the eighth century and the beginning of the twelfth; and politically in the sense of the era during which the Fujiwara family administered the national affairs through the Court in Kyōtō.

There are, in fact, six great divisions of Japanese history: first, the patriarchal age when the sovereign was only the head of a group of tribal chiefs, each possessing a hereditary share of the governing power; secondly, a brief period, from the middle of the seventh to the early part of the eighth century, when the tribal chiefs had disappeared and the Throne was approximately autocratic; thirdly, an interval of some eighty years, called the Nara epoch, during which the propagandism of Buddhism, and the development of the material and artistic civilisation that came in that religion's train, engrossed the attention of the nation; fourthly, the Heian epoch, a period of three centuries, when the Court in Kyōtō ruled vicariously through the Fujiwara family; fifthly, the age of military feudalism, from the beginning of the twelfth to the middle of the nineteenth century, when the administrative power was grasped by soldier nobles; and sixthly, the present, or *Meiji*, epoch of constitutional monarchy. Among these six eras, the Nara and Heian were richest in religious influences; the Meiji is poorest.

It has been shown already that the supernatural had a large place in the thoughts of the early

Japanese, and that for important guidance they relied on divination, omens, ordeals, and portents of various kinds. With the introduction of Chinese civilisation they added to this catalogue the superstitions of Confucianism as well as those of Taoism, and when Buddhism arrived, its teachings accentuated the confusion between the mundane and the supernal. This phase of Japanese ethics merits a moment's attention.

There is a tradition that the first professional fortune-teller in Japan learned his art in Korea. The truth appears to be that, about the third century of the Christian era, the method of divination anciently practised in Japan by scorching the bones of a deer, was replaced by a tortoise-shell-burning process, imported from Korea, while, at the same time, the marks produced by the fire ceased to be arbitrarily interpreted by the diviner and were explained by the aid of elaborate diagrams. In either case the soothsayer had to preface his divination by several days of supplication to the particular deity within whose province the affair lay, and had to abstain for some period from eating or touching anything unclean in a religious sense. Direct revelations from heaven vouchsafed after long fasting and meditation in a temple or shrine, were also regarded with as much reverential faith by the Japanese as by the Jews of old or the early Christians. This method of obtaining transcendental guidance had been in vogue for centuries before the introduction of

Buddhism, but its credit was greatly enhanced by the latter, for the Buddhist priests attributed all their important acts to heavenly inspiration. The most vital affairs of State were regulated by these revelations. Even the title of an usurper to displace the legitimate line of emperors was thus determined. Confucianism with its Book of Changes, to which the great philosopher had devoted profoundest study, gave a new impetus to divination. At the beginning of the eighth century — in other words, at the very time when radical reforms, legislative, administrative, fiscal, and social, were being introduced from China, an office called the Bureau of the Two Principles was organised in the Department of Home Affairs, and placed under the direction of six diviners who undertook to read the will of heaven by reference to the operations of the male and female principles of nature — the *yo* (yang) and the *in* (ying). Faith in this form of divination increased constantly. It replaced almost completely the process of burning tortoise-shell, which ultimately was limited to religious services held in the Imperial Court or at the great *Shintô* shrine. The people, of course, resorted to simpler methods in the affairs of every day. Listening for the first words of a wayfarer at cross-roads or beyond the gate of a dwelling; planting a post, approaching it with steps adapted to a formula and constructing an omen from the word coincident with the last step; raising the first

stone found on the wayside and calculating its weight; finding signs in water, in the sounds of music, in the bubbles of the rice-caldron, — these and a dozen other trivial accidents helped men and women to shirk the exercise of robust judgment. The Buddhist doctrine of metempsychosis added largely to the mystery of things. People now learned that the spirits of the dead, which had always been accredited with divine influence, might be present in their midst in some unrecognisable form. The ancestor before whose cenotaph a man burned incense might be watching him from the eyes of the ox that had drawn him to the temple, and the baying of a dog at the fall of the moon might be a voice from the grave of an honoured relative. Miraculous manifestations began to be generally credited. A disentombed skull found voice to express gratitude for favours bestowed on it in life. The mouth of a man who insulted a reader of the *sutras* was suddenly twisted by paralysis. A local headman, levying heavy taxes from the people, was transformed into a beast of burden. A fisherman who threw his nets with merciless frequency, fell into a supernaturally kindled flame. A man who overloaded his horse was beaten to death by hailstones. A crab became the means of bringing riches to its liberator. Multitudes of such tales circulated throughout the country. Even an Emperor (Kōken) was stricken with sickness for desecrating the foundations of a

temple. It is observable that the ethical teaching of these miracles was good, however destructive their effects on the moral fibre of the nation. They were of course accompanied by an undergrowth of minor superstitions. A lover sleeping with his robe turned inside out, would certainly dream of the object of his affection. A man longed for by another or destined soon to enjoy a happy meeting, found the string of his undergarment loosen automatically. An itching eyebrow or a troublesome nose had its significance. A knot made on the twig of a tree remained tight or came untied according as a project was to succeed or fail. The house of a person who had set out on a journey must not be swept, nor must hair be combed there, for the space of three days. The traveller prayed at a cross-way or on a hill-top raising a periapt aloft in his hands. A voyage by sea was preceded by worship of the god of the wind. The grass of forgetfulness (*wasure-gusa*, the Day lily) was carried as a means of burying sad thoughts in oblivion, and a stumbling horse indicated homesickness on the part of his rider. All pure white animals or birds, a black fox, a forked lotus root or tree-branch, — these were held to be objects of the best omen. People procuring them and presenting them to the palace were liberally rewarded, and sometimes the imperial satisfaction took the form of a general amnesty or a change of the era's title.

With the growth of these superstitions faith

in the efficacy of prayer and incantation grew also. From the welfare of the humblest subject to the safety of the State, everything was supposed to be obtainable by worship, and the priests who chaunted litanies and performed religious rites became objects of profound veneration. Every chamber in the Palace was open to them. So long as *Shintô* was the sole creed of the nation, men did not trouble themselves much about malevolent spirits. But with the advent of Buddhism, preaching its many hells peopled by cruel demons, people learned to attribute all the ills and mischances of life to the influence of dead enemies endowed with demoniacal attributes, or to supernatural power exercised by the living through the medium of incantations. The maleficent spirits were supposed to be always on the watch for an opportunity to work evil, and it was therefore necessary that constant watch should be kept by the side of a sick person. Some protection was obtained by observing certain ceremonies and repeating certain formulæ, but the intervention of a priest seemed the only complete safeguard, and thus the intoning of litanies and the rolling of rosaries came to be counted much more efficacious in cases of illness than the services of a physician. Scarcely any incident of every-day life failed to be interpreted as a portent, and men had to be constantly on the watch lest by neglecting some precaution they should cause a harmless sign to be perverted

into an omen of evil. Naturally these disquieting fantasies had the effect of rendering people nervous and timid. Even a soldier dreaded to walk alone in the darkness. The feat by which Michinaga, one of the greatest and most unscrupulous of the Fujiwara nobles, laid the foundation of his fame, illustrates this craven mood. At a *réunion* of princes and nobles in the Palace of the Emperor Kwazan (985–987), some tales of ghostly appearances having been recounted, it was proposed that the listeners should exhibit their courage by proceeding, one at a time, to remote parts of the Palace. The three Fujiwara brothers volunteered to undertake the task, but only one of them, Michinaga, was able to achieve it, and his valour won universal eulogy. Sensual excesses, which were without limit in the Heian epoch, supplemented and strengthened this ever-present dread of the spirits of the dead and of evil, so that idiocy became common and the span of life in the upper classes was shortened to thirty or forty years. The Emperor Daigo (898–930) actually fell into a dangerous illness, owing to a belief that he was pursued by the vengeance of a loyal minister, Michizane, whose unjust punishment he had sanctioned, and as a protection against the same danger his baby son, the prince imperial, was confined day and night in one apartment and guarded by a chosen band of soldiers during the first three years after his birth. When the renowned Fujiwara chief,

Tokihira, died, men said that he had been destroyed by the spirit of this same Michizane, whose disgrace and banishment he had contrived,[1] and every misfortune that befell a conspicuous family was ascribed to the angry ghost of some prince, nobleman, or soldier who had been done to death in the numerous political intrigues of the era. The Emperor Sanjo (1012–1015) believed that his calamity of partial blindness was caused by a vengeful spirit which, assuming the form of a winged dog, rode on his neck and flapped its pinions over his eyes. Above the palace of another sovereign a hideous creature, half monkey, half snake, hovered every night, throwing His Majesty into convulsions; and it was counted a deed of magnificent valour that a Minamoto warrior shot an arrow into the cloud enshrouding the monster.

The Buddhist priests would probably have striven earnestly to dispel this noxious atmosphere of superstition had it not contributed so much to the growth of their own importance. At the close of the eighth century and in the beginning of the ninth, the creed found two propagandists of the highest genius, Dengyō and Kōbō — otherwise called Saicho and Kōkai, — the first preachers of sectarian Buddhism in Japan, Dengyō being the founder of the *Tendai* sect and Kōbō of the *Shingon*. The doctrines of these two sects presented no violent contrasts. They

[1] See Appendix, note 41.

may be described as exoteric and esoteric exegeses of the same scripture; and in an era when religious tolerance extended to the blending of *Shintô* and Buddhism, distinctions so obscure as those between the *Tendai* and the *Shingon* sects were not likely to reflect any doubts on the infallibility of the original doctrine. The two great expounders contributed equally to the spread of Buddhism, and not only were they assisted during their life and after their death by zealots of scarcely inferior calibre, but their example of ecstatic devotion exercised an ennobling influence on the conduct of the priests in general. Long fasts, years of asceticism in mountain solitudes, and even self-inflicted tortures contributed, on the one hand, to win respect for the faith, and, on the other, to inculcate the importance of abstinence and self-denial. The chief temple of the *Tendai* sect (on Hiyei-zan) was erected on the northeast of Kyōtō in order to be a barrier against the evil spirits supposed to issue constantly from the "Demons' Gate," which was situated in that quarter of the firmament, and the priests, apparently without any exception, spared no pains to promote a belief that their services were essential to avert calamity or insure success. All classes of the nation accepted that view. Religious ceremonies on a magnificent scale were constantly held at the Imperial Court, as many as a thousand priests sometimes officiating. However straitened might be the finances of the State,

funds were never spared for these purposes, or for the building of splendid temples. The Fujiwara family behaved as though it considered that its fortunes depended solely on the intervention of the priests, and the example thus set by the greatest nobles in the land did not fail to produce its effect on their inferiors. This delirious devotion to Buddhism reached its acme at the close of the eleventh century, when, during a reign of only thirteen years, the Emperor Shirakawa caused 5,470 religious pictures to be painted, ordered the casting of one hundred and twenty-seven statues of Buddha, each sixteen feet high, of 3,150 life-size images and of 2,930 smaller idols, and constructed twenty-one large temples and 446,630 religious edifices of various kinds. This same sovereign, in obedience to the Buddhist commandment against taking life, issued an edict prohibiting the slaughter of any living thing, ordering the release of all hawks, falcons, and other caged birds, forbidding the presentation of fish to the Palace, and requiring the destruction of all fishing nets, which last mandate was carried out in 8,800 cases. It became customary also to have services performed at temples on festive occasions. The enormous expense thus entailed may be inferred from the fact that, when a man reached the age of forty, he purchased a further span of life and happiness by causing masses to be said in forty temples; at fifty he enlisted the services of fifty temples; and

at sixty those of sixty. Recovery from serious illness being generally attributed to the mercy of Buddha, men began to receive the tonsure as an evidence of gratitude, and many did so from a mere altruistic conception, namely, that if a person entered the priesthood, the future salvation of nine families related to him would be secured.

All these things refuse to be reconciled with the theory that the religious sentiment is deficient among the Japanese. They have proved themselves as accessible to supernatural influences as any nation known to history.

Undoubtedly Buddhism contributed immensely to the nation's moral and material progress. But its teachings had an unwholesome effect in the Heian epoch. The character of the Japanese underwent very marked modification during the first sixteen centuries of their history. At the time of their arrival as invaders they were hardy, fierce people, fond of fighting and ready to reduce to slavery every one that they overcame by force of arms. But by degrees the comparatively genial climate of their new home, its soft scenery, the introduction of Chinese civilisation with its endless codes of ceremony and etiquette, and the spread of a literature which occupied itself chiefly with tender sentiments and scenic charms, produced enervating effects. The rude warriors were transformed, first into votaries of pleasure, then into hysterical profligates, and finally into *blasé* pessimists. Buddhism greatly assisted the growth of

this last mood. Partly from sincere belief, partly because the presence of a prince or noble in a cloister contributed materially to its wealth and reputation, the priests preached the doctrine of abandoning this sinful world and devoting life to heaven's service. Their exhortations prevailed even with emperors.[1] When a great personage took the tonsure, he presented usually a sum of money and often a tract of land to the temple which received him, and the priests obtained similar acknowledgment for preserving and praying before the cenotaphs of the dead.[2] The temples were not merely edifices for worship like Occidental churches. In the vicinity of the sacred structure where the image of Buddha was enshrined, there stood extensive buildings forming the residences of the priests, and containing suites of chambers where illustrious parishioners found accommodation on ceremonial occasions. The greater the prosperity of the temple, the more numerous and magnificent these buildings, so that, in some cases, a monastery constituted a little town inhabited by thousands of monks. Living practically beyond the pale of the civil authority, these communities of priests soon began to form military organisations, which were used at first for purposes of self-protection, but ultimately for all kinds of lawlessness and aggression. Formidable bands of halberdiers would issue from one monastery to attack another, or even to raid and burn

[1] See Appendix, note 42. [2] See Appendix, note 43.

the houses of their lay enemies, and if the Government attempted to check them, or if they saw reason to complain of any administrative interference, they would march in a body to the Imperial Palace or to the residence of the Prime Minister, and prefer a clamorous protest. On such occasions they were careful to carry with them a "sacred car," or a "divine tree,"[1] for the presence of these emblems secured them effectually against armed opposition. If the authorities declined to grant them redress, they would roll their thousands of rosaries between the palms of their hands with frenzied vehemence, at the same time loudly invoking the curses of heaven and the pains of the nethermost hell on any one, however exalted his rank, who ventured to oppose the will of Buddha. Even the Emperor prostrated himself before this multitudinous imprecation and conceded everything demanded by the suppliants. It might be supposed that such acts would have discredited Buddhism in the eyes of the nation. But the priests never raised their hand against the people. Their feuds were with the usurping aristocrats, and especially with the military class; for the latter, as the Heian epoch wore to its close, began to grasp the administrative power and to exercise it in a manner subversive of much of the progress with which Buddhism had been closely associated from the time of its advent.

In spite of the vogue acquired by Buddhism,

[1] See Appendix, note 44.

and in spite of the fact that it had apparently absorbed *Shintô*, the latter retained its hold on the heart of the nation, and its ceremonials continued to be scrupulously observed in the Imperial Court. Buddhist priests were strictly excluded from the great rites of the indigenous creed. More extravagant than ever were the restrictions imposed by the canon of purity, which, with ancestor-worship, may be called the basis of *Shintô*. Defilement, originally attributed only to uncleanliness or to the commission of sin, was extended in this age of superstition to many inevitable incidents of daily life — such as deaths, births,[1] burials, *in memoriam* ceremonies, the eating of flesh, the tasting of anything acid, the application of the moxa, contact with disease and so on. To have been contaminated in any of these ways disqualified a man for association with his friends and for the discharge of his official duties, during a period of varying duration. There was an elaborate chain of vicarious defilement. If, *A* being defiled, *B* happened to sit where *A* had sat, then *B* and all his family incurred defilement; and if, thereafter, *C* went into *B's* residence, then *C* too became defiled, but not the members of his family. If, however, the process were reversed by *B* going into *C's* house, then the taint fell upon the whole of *C's* family. At *C* the chain ended: *D* might enter *C's* house with impunity.[2] In the observance of these rules most unnatural violence was done

[1] See Appendix, note 45.

[2] See Appendix, note 46.

to the instinct of charity. Servants attacked by serious maladies were sometimes shut into a secluded building and left to die without succour, or were even carried to an unfrequented place and abandoned to their fate. A man having driven his sick brother from his house, the patient, failing to obtain admittance to the residence of any friend, was ultimately transported to the cremation ground, where he lay till death came; and an apparently credible record tells how the corpse of a mendicant friar lay unburied for a month in the belfry of a temple, neither priests nor parishioners venturing to incur defilement by removing the body. Such indifference to the prompting of mercy is strange to Japanese character. It was an artificial mood bred of the superstitious vapours that obscured men's moral vision in that singular age.

The effeminacy of the Court nobles was as great as their superstition, and their eccentricities suggest that sensual indulgence had reduced them to a state of imbecility. Tadahira, the younger brother of Tokihira, the great Fujiwara chief, painted a cuckoo on his fan, and imitated the cry of the bird whenever he opened the fan. At the time when he distinguished himself by these callow antics he held high military rank. Another of the Fujiwara nobles (Yasutada) made a habit of carrying hot rice-dumplings in the bosom of his garment, for the sake of their warmth, and throwing them away when they cooled, for the

sake of displaying his opulence. To play the *samisen*[1] was the accomplishment of a legislator; to turn a couplet the proof of a statesman's capacity. It is impossible to recognise the Japanese of later eras in some of the hysterical creatures with whom history peoples the Heian Court. The stoical *samurai*, whose first rule of conduct was imperturbability whatever gusts of passion assailed him, had no representative among these voluptuaries of the capital: they were as emotional as the weakest of women. The disappointment of not meeting his lover, or of brief separation from her, produced an access of weeping that drove a man to his couch, and no one thought shame of shedding floods of idle tears in the presence of verdant spring and solemn autumn, or of sobbing in unison with the cricket's chirp and the stag's cry. At no time in the nation's story did wifely fidelity fall so low in public esteem. Widows took a second or a third husband without compunction. Divorced women did not forfeit their eligibility for new ties. Wives had often two or three "protectors." Husbands made a boast of the number of mistresses they supported. A wife was put away or a mistress deserted in the ordinary routine of daily doings. An extraordinary and scarcely comprehensible mania for poetical composition contributed to this immorality. It would have been almost a sacrilege to limit the success of a gracefully turned couplet. Men and

[1] See Appendix, note 47.

women surrendered themselves to the poetical delirium, so that a dainty thought deftly expressed came to be counted a sufficient price for a lady's virtue. Imperial concubines received the addresses of court officials. To rob a man of his wife did not shock society. Brothers and cousins suffered such thefts at each other's hands. Fujiwara no Tokihira, regent and prime minister, purchased his uncle's wife. Mothers received the embraces of their step-sons. Such vices among the patrician classes found a rude reflection in the conduct of the plebeians. Women were expected, or compelled, to be facile under all circumstances, and in the general extermination of shame Buddhist priests took their part by openly violating their vows of celibacy or abandoning the cowl for the sake of pursuing an illicit intrigue.

This immorality was not accompanied by immodesty. On the contrary, social punctilio exacted the closest observance. A love affair might be notorious, but it must never be scandalous or obtrusive. Even the preliminaries of marriage consisted often in an interchange of letters and poems rather than in meetings or conversations. A man estimated the conjugal qualities of a young lady by her skill in finding scholarly similes and her perception of the cadence of words. If, indeed, a woman was so fortunate as to acquire a reputation for learning, she possessed a certificate of universal virtue and amia-

bility. Therefore polite society tabooed every form of wooing more demonstrative than the use of pen and paper. Nothing could exceed the decorum of the aristocratic lady. She hid her depravity behind a mask of demureness. To allow her face to be seen in public or her voice to be heard by a stranger was a shocking solecism. If she had not a carriage to ride abroad, she covered her face with a hood. She never addressed a man of the lower orders except through a servant, and even then did not permit him to ascend to the level where she sat. With one of a better, though still inferior, grade she conversed directly, divided from him, however, by a paper sliding-door; and the next step of condescension was to talk from behind a screen, hiding her face with a fan. Even her own step-brother must not be met face to face.

The pastimes of the upper classes reached their highest point of elaboration in this era. At the head of all stood the game of competitive-couplet making (*uta-awase*). The manner of this pursuit, as practised in the Nara epoch, has already been briefly described. New importance was given to it by the Empress Kōkō, at the close of the ninth century. In her Palace of Horikawa she organised poem parties on an unprecedented scale. The proprieties were strictly observed. On one side of the room the ladies were marshalled, on the other the men, and a genuine contest of literary skill ensued, every guest being required to

compose a stanza on a given subject. Sometimes Chinese poetic models were followed; sometimes Japanese; sometimes both. But it is not to be understood that the rhyming terminals of Chinese verse formed at any time a visible feature of Japanese poetical composition. Here, indeed, is exposed one of the most irrational conceits that the literature of any country furnishes. Many of the Japanese poetasters of the Heian era took infinite pains to compose couplets which, they supposed, would satisfy the rhyming requirements of Chinese verse if the Chinese sounds of the ideographs were accurately given and Chinese syntactical order duly preserved. But the true Chinese pronunciation of an ideograph was never known in Japan, and the Chinese order of words had to be changed to make a sentence intelligible to Japanese ears. Hence a verselet laboriously constructed according to the Chinese laws, lost its rhyming terminals altogether when the ideographs received their true pronunciation, and, in fact, retained nothing of its original character except the sense. To expect that an English verbatim translation of the Bucolics of Virgil must fall naturally into hexameters and pentameters, were not more reasonable than to anticipate that a Japanese rendering of a Chinese couplet should preserve the rhyme and metre of the Chinese original. It was characteristic of the silly artificialism of the time that men's energies should be absorbed in the manufacture of

such deformities. The genuine Japanese style of couplet was chiefly in vogue, however, though always with increasing loss of the old vigour of thought, and increasing reliance on tricks of diction and trivialities of conception. Several of these poem-composing parties became historical events, not merely for the sake of the couplets produced, but also because of the magnificence and tastefulness of the entertainments. Often a feature of the arrangements was a display of choice flowering plants which served to inspire the poetasters and to reward the most successful. Loose as were the morals of the time, the language of these verses was seldom indelicate. But in the closing days of the Heian epoch, when luxury and self-indulgence reached their extreme point, a new pastime was introduced, — the competitive composition of love-letters. In these all phases of carnal affection were depicted or suggested by the aid of refined and scholarly phraseology.[1] Nevertheless, in everything that concerned outward appearance, the conventions of decorum were observed with the utmost strictness in all Japanese polite pastimes at whatever era. The costumes and customs of an Occidental ball-room in the nineteenth century would have seemed altogether shocking to mediæval Japanese.

Gathering plants of the sweet-flag in June and comparing the length of their roots; writing verses

[1] See Appendix, note 48.

or drawing pictures on fans supplied by the host; composing poetic conundrums; fitting together the valves of shells on the inside of which poems were inscribed and decorative designs painted; burning incense, an amusement so elaborate as to amount to a science, its paraphernalia of the most costly and beautiful description; playing chess or *go;* reconstructing celebrated stanzas from one or two clue words; writing lists of ideographs with a common part;[1] fan lotteries; foot-ball and hawking, — these were the chief amusements of the aristocrats in the Heian epoch. Betting was added to give zest to the games. But the stakes did not take the form of money: a work of art, a roll of brocade, a house, a feast, a horse, and so on were objects that a gentleman might play for, though gold or silver as media of exchange must not enter his thoughts. Japanese foot-ball — derived originally from China — bore no resemblance to the rough-and-tumble contests of the Occident. It was simply the art of kicking a ball high and keeping it continuously off the ground. A certain Narimichi, whose official position corresponded to that of a Minister of State, gained undying fame by his skill in this amusement. After devoting a considerable part of seven thousand consecutive days to the practice of the art, rising even from his sick-bed for the purpose, he attained such lightness and deftness of foot that, while kicking the ball, he traversed the shoulders of a row of

[1] See Appendix, note 49.

servitors, including a tonsured priest, and the men thus trodden on declared that they had felt nothing more than a hawk hopping along their backs, the priest saying that for his part it had seemed simply as though some one had put a hat on his bald pate. That is the historical record! The patience that supported this statesman through nineteen years of perpetual foot-ball practice, and the terms used by the annalists to describe his achievements, are equally suggestive of the mood of the era.

Love for flowers, which amounts almost to a passion in Japan, had declared itself long before the time now under review, but, like everything else, it assumed an extravagant character in that epoch. Large trees were completely covered with artificial blossoms of the plum or the cherry to recall the spring, ancient pines overhanging miniature lakes were festooned with wistaria blooms in autumn, snow was piled in vast heaps so as to preserve some traces of it under sunny skies. To be unnatural, abnormal, unreasonable, was to possess a special charm. One of the manias of the time was to keep pet dogs and cats. The annals speak of the "delightful voice and winning ways" of the cat, and tell how not only were cats and dogs called by human beings' names, but official titles also were bestowed on them, and religious services were performed when they died. A pet cat in the Palace bore kittens in the year 999, whereupon the Emperor and the Ministers of State sent

presents appropriate to occasions of childbirth, and a Court lady was appointed to nurse the kittens. This incident provoked ridicule among the public, but did not seem inconsistent with the ways of the Court.

Chapter VII

THE HEIAN EPOCH (Continued)

(End of the Eighth to the Middle of the Twelfth Century)

IT was in this epoch that Japanese civilisation assumed many of the external features so much and so justly admired by foreigners in modern times. The nation's profound appreciation of natural beauties asserted itself in the embellishment of the new capital, though the prim mathematical regularity of the city's Chinese plan might well have deterred any exercise of Japanese taste, which abhors stiffness and formality. Along the sides of the streets willows and cherries were planted. Limpid streams flowed from green hills that held the city in their embrace. Every mansion had its park, and in every park the four seasons found well-devised opportunities for the display of their special charms. From temples whose colossal roofs looked down upon the dwellings of their parishioners, the sweet and sonorous voices of mighty bells tolled the hours, and the sound of chaunted litanies summoned people to bow before altars resplendent with gold and silver. Each month brought an opportunity for the city

to make holiday. Sometimes people flocked to watch the spring sun rise above the cherry-blossoms at Sagano; sometimes they went to see autumn moonlight bathe the maples by the Oi-gawa. Sometimes they lavished great sums on brilliant festivals in honour of the numerous deities, whose places of worship had now become comparatively magnificent in architectural proportions and interior decoration. Many of the graces that distinguished all phases of Japanese mediæval life and all branches of Japanese mediæval art were still wanting, or only present in embryo, the models and fashions imported wholesale from China not having yet been purged of their formal conventionalism. But the nation had turned its back finally on everything rude and archaic, and taken a long stride toward the heights of refinement it ultimately reached.

Architectural designs were obtained in the main from China. During the Nara epoch the construction of temples had chiefly occupied attention, but in the Heian era the palaces of the sovereign and the mansions of ministers and nobles were built on a scale of unprecedented grandeur. It is true that all the structures of the time had the defect of a box-like appearance. Massive, towering roofs, which impart an air of stateliness even to a wooden building and yet, by their graceful curves, avoid any suggestion of ponderosity, were still confined to

Buddhist edifices. The architect of private dwellings attached more importance to satin-surfaced boards and careful joinery than to any appearance of strength or solidity. Spaciousness and elegance, however, were not altogether wanting. The main gate of the Palace was flanked on either side by guard-houses having a forest of pagoda-like minarets, which served as watch-towers, and there stood on its east and west, inside, two buildings, where officials assembled before proceeding to the place of audience, which consisted of twelve halls, symmetrically disposed and each having its own status. Beyond these there was the "hall of pleasure and plenty," where social entertainments were held; the "hall of the word of truth" for rites of worship; the "hall of military virtue" for soldierly exercises; the "hall of central tranquillisation" for venerating the spirits of the imperial ancestors; and, finally, the residence of the sovereign, comprising sixteen halls and five galleries.[1] At the entrance to the principal of these sixteen halls — the *Shishinden* or "purple hall of the north star" — there were planted a cherry-tree and an orange-tree, the "guardian cherry of the left" and the "guardian orange of the right." The floor of all these edifices was raised some six feet above the ground, and was reached by flights of wooden steps placed at frequent intervals.

The general plan excepted, there was little to

[1] See Appendix, note 50.

distinguish the Imperial Palace from the mansion of a great nobleman or minister of State. The latter consisted of a principal hall, where the master of the house lived, ate, and slept — there being no practically recognised distinctions of dining-room, sitting-room and bedroom, — and of three suites of chambers, disposed on the north, the east, and the west of the principal hall. In the northern suite the lady of the house dwelt,[1] the eastern and western suites being allotted to the other members of the family. It was essential that no room should face the north, lest supernal influences of malign tendency should pervade the household. Corridors joined the principal hall to the subordinate edifices, for as yet the idea had not been conceived of having more than one chamber under the same roof.

In front of this row of linked buildings a garden was laid out. Much care and sometimes large sums of money were lavished on its construction. But the general plan was almost uniform. Little of the great variety of landscape, breadth of design, and subtlety of arrangement that ultimately distinguished Japanese parks could be seen in the gardens of the Heian epoch. Any one who has made a study of Chinese paintings must have recognised that they fall into one of two broad categories, literary pictures and artistic pictures. The former are to the latter what the stiff formality of the square ideograph is to

[1] See Appendix, note 51.

the graceful softness of the cursive script. In the literary picture, the rocks assume fantastic shapes; the cliffs marshal themselves in strange, unnatural phalanxes; the trees, gnarled and distorted, grow in perplexing places, and the whole scene suggests rigid irregularity and conventional quaintness. Something of that was visible in the gardens of the Heian time. The general design had only one orthodox type. A lake, not ungracefully shaped, occupied the centre, surrounding an artificial island to which wooden bridges gave access. Trees of various kinds, notably pines, trained with infinite patience into strange curves of stem and wayward disposition of branch, overhung the lake, presenting strong contrasts of foliage. A waterfall, or the semblance of one if the reality could not be achieved, fed the lake from the south, and on its eastern and western shores, respectively, stood an "angling grotto" and a "hermitage of spring waters," whither the family and their friends repaired on summer evenings, gaining access to these buildings by corridors which formed the boundaries of the garden and were recessed at intervals by waiting-rooms for domestics and guards. In the most orthodox park a limpid stream flowed, with ribbon-like windings, from the row of buildings to the eastern and western sides of the lake, and was spanned here and there by bridges of varied form. Round the margin of the lake and at the feet of the "angling grotto" lay rocks of many hues, beaten into fantastic

shapes by centuries of collision with rushing waters. The arrangement of these rocks did not yet suggest the complete concealment of art which was attained in later ages. Although the great painter, Kose no Kanaoka (850–890), whose perception of the glories of decorative art was almost a revelation, devoted his genius to the planning of parks and rockeries, his designs did not break away altogether from the hard stiff style of the Chinese horticulturists, nor give much promise of the delightfully natural originality that distinguished the work of his successors in subsequent eras. Nevertheless he certainly showed his countrymen that the Chinese "garden of the sacred fountain" (*shinsen-yen*), which they had hitherto regarded as an inviolable model, might be replaced by other conceptions, and within the two centuries immediately following his death, Kyōtō was enriched with a number of detached palaces and noblemen's villas sufficiently grand and beautiful to be recorded in the pages of history. Of these the most famous was the "tiled hall" (*Kawara-in*) of the Minamoto chief, Tōru; so famous, indeed, that its owner received the pseudonym of the "tyled first-minister" (*Kawara-no-Sadaijin*). This villa has a special interest because its park showed the first definite attempt to reproduce in miniature one of the country's most celebrated scenic gems, the "salt-shore" (*shio-hama*) of the province of Mutsu. Fidelity of imitation was carried to the extent of boiling down

eight hundred gallons of sea-water daily, and putting the salt into the park lake so that the traces of its water might be realistically briny. Kyōtō had no less than ten "detached palaces" by the beginning of the twelfth century, and on days of festival their western gates were thrown open for the admission of all visitors without distinction of rank. But it did not occur to any annalist or writer of the era to pen detailed descriptions of these buildings or their surroundings. All that can be certainly affirmed is that nature in her normal aspects began at this time to be taken as the best guide by planners of parks and gardens.

The area occupied by the buildings and the park was enclosed, in the case of a princely or noble mansion, by a high earthen wall having a fosse at its foot; but people of inferior rank had to be content with a wooden fence. Social status influenced the form of the principal entrance-gate also. The "four-footed gate," that is to say, a two-leaved gate having a roof supported by four pillars, was the most aristocratic; a "two-footed" gate, still with two leaves, came next in order of respectability, and a postern was the humblest of all.

The interior arrangement and furniture of an aristocrat's mansion showed much refinement in this era, though the architect suffered himself to be trammelled by rules which he afterwards violated with advantage. The principal hall — distinguished externally from the minor edifices by

having a four-faced roof without gables, whereas they had roofs of only two faces with gables at the ends — was usually of the same dimensions, 42 feet square. Its centre was occupied by a "parent chamber," 30 feet square, around which ran an ambulatory (*hisashi*) and a veranda (*yen-gawa*), each 6 feet wide. The "mother chamber" and the ambulatory were ceiled, sometimes with interlacing strips of bark or broad laths, so as to produce a plaited effect; sometimes with plain boards. The veranda had no ceiling. Sliding doors, a characteristic feature of modern Japanese houses, had not yet come into use, and no means were provided for closing the veranda, so that, at night, the space included in the "mother chamber" and the ambulatory was alone habitable. The ambulatory, however, was surrounded by a wall of latticed timber or plain boards, the lower half of which could be removed altogether, whereas the upper half, being suspended from hinges, could be swung upward and outward. It was thus possible to regulate the amount of light and air admitted. Privacy was obtainable by hanging blinds of split bamboo in the place of the latticed wall, and communication from the ambulatory to the veranda was by doors, three on each side of the room, opening outward. As for the "mother chamber," it was separated from the ambulatory by similar bamboo blinds, with silk cords for raising or lowering them, or by curtains. Round the outer edge of

the veranda ran a railing, broken at three places to give access to wooden steps by which the garden was reached, and the main entrance had a porch to shelter palanquins and ox-carriages.

Such was the general scheme of all aristocratic dwellings. It was derived in great part from the plan of Buddhist temples. The idea of dividing the interior space into several rooms had not yet been conceived. Neither was the floor covered with thick rectangular mats of uniform size, fitting together so exactly as to form a perfectly level surface. That extensive use of *tatami*, as this essentially Japanese kind of mat is called, came into fashion at a later period. In the Heian epoch floors were boarded, mats being sometimes laid in a limited part of the room only, and always in the space which served for a bed. The aristocratic sleeping-place of the time was a species of movable matted dais. Its sides were lacquered, and posts rose from each corner to support a canopy and curtains of silk and fine gauze, — a mosquito net in fact. This drapery was held in place round the base of the dais by means of weights in the form of Dogs of Fo, chiselled in bronze or silver, and the mats had broad borders of brocade for patrician dwellings and of coarse cotton cloth for humbler folks. Toward the close of the epoch it became customary to cover the floors entirely with mats,[1] especially in rooms reserved for the habitation of

[1] See Appendix, note 52.

women, and the lattice-work panels and hinged doors surrounding the "parent chamber" were replaced by sliding doors which, being mere skeletons of interlacing ribs covered with thin white silk,[1] acted like windows for admitting light. Then, also, the partitioning of wide interior spaces into several rooms began to be practised, and the partitioning was effected by means of sliding doors similar to those mentioned above, or covered with thicker paper which now began to offer a field for the brush of decorative artists. As years passed and as the scale of living grew more and more luxurious in Kyōtō, the dimensions of great noblemen's mansions became extravagant, and at the beginning of the eleventh century an imperial edict limited the size of a house to two hundred and forty yards square, at the same time imposing other restrictions as to the materials of roofs and walls. These vetoes proved quite ineffective.

House-furniture was then, and always remained, a comparatively insignificant affair. The Japanese never had to trouble themselves much about such things as curtains, carpets, chairs, sofas, or tables. When an aristocrat wanted to read, for example, a small cushion was placed on the floor for his seat, having on the left an arm-rest, in front a lectern, on the right a bookcase. All these objects were made of rich lacquer. A screen also stood close at hand; not the six-leaved

[1] See Appendix, note 53.

folding screen of later times, but a silk curtain depending from a horizontal bar, which was supported by a slender pillar fixed in a heavy socket. A metal mirror mounted on an elaborate tripod-stand, a clothes-horse, usually of gold lacquer, and a species of low two-shelved table on which stood a censer and a box of incense-implements, completed the furniture of the apartment in warm weather, but in winter there was added a box for burning charcoal — metal braziers not having yet come into fashion. For lighting purposes the commonest device was a rush-wick laid in a shallow vessel of oil from which the end of the wick projected. This vessel was either supported on a bamboo tripod, or fixed to an upright rod moving in a vertical socket, so that the height of the light could be regulated at will. The annals speak of "combustible earth" and "combustible water," in other words, coal and oil, as having been presented to the Court in the middle of the seventh century by the inhabitants of a part of Japan corresponding to the present province of Echigo,[1] but it does not appear that coal was ever employed in ancient times. Tallow candles seem to have been in use from the ninth century. They were set on a pricket stand. In short, the Japanese of the Heian epoch were as well supplied with lighting apparatus as any of their successors until modern times.

[1] See Appendix, note 54.

For riding abroad ox-carriages and palanquins were used. The palanquin, essentially a Chinese institution, was originally reserved for the sovereign, the Empress, and the chief ritualist, — an imperial prince, — but that rule ultimately lost its exclusive force. In general form the palanquin bore a strong resemblance to the sedan-chair of the eighteenth century in England. The shafts, however, were of great length, and a long curtain of thin silk completely draped the body, concealing the inmate from public gaze. Sometimes richest gold lacquer covered the woodwork of this vehicle ; sometimes the body, shafts, and roof were of glossy black, contrasting finely with the snow-white curtain and the gilded mountings. A very much more elaborate and brilliant equipage was the ox-carriage. Its portly wheels and strong shafts were generally black, but the body glowed with richly tinted lacquer, and was set off by ornaments of silver elaborately chased and chiselled. Delicate bamboo blinds, coloured green and having bands of red brocade and tassels of silk, hung at the four sides, and the ox, generally a jet-black beast of fine proportions, was handsomely caparisoned with red harness. One of these carriages, moving along at a stately pace and escorted by a strong body of officers in flowing robes of silk and brocade and men at arms with picturesque costumes and glittering accoutrements, presented a spectacle in harmony with the luxurious extravagance of the time.

"Carriage folk" stood on a special social pedestal then just as they do now. Everybody kept a carriage if he could possibly afford the luxury, and everybody that could not afford it tried to borrow one for public occasions. Now and then economical sovereigns made efforts to check the spendthrift tendency of the aristocrats in these matters, but no permanent success was achieved.

There was an elaborate code of procedure for the guidance of equipages meeting *en route*. Whether to dismount from horseback, whether to stop one's carriage, whether to get out of it and stand on the road; whether even to unyoke the ox whether to limit the etiquette to an attendant's obeisance, — all these and other points were regulated by accurate canons.

As to costume, comparing the Heian epoch with the Nara, there is found in the former a marked tendency to increased elaboration and fuller dimensions. The head-dress, in the case of princes and principal military officials, became again an imposing structure glittering with jewels; the sleeves grew so large that they hung to the knees when a man's arms were crossed, and the trousers also were made full and baggy, so that they resembled a divided skirt. Unprecedented importance attached to the patterns of the rich silks and brocades used for garments. The sovereign's robe of State was necessarily ornamented with a design of nine objects, — the sun, the moon, the stars, a mountain, a dragon, etc., —

MILITARY COSTUMES OF THIRTEENTH AND FIFTEENTH CENTURIES.

1. Military ceremonial costume, Kamakura Epoch, thirteenth century.
2. Prince Morinaga (1325) in full armour and wearing the *hōro* (drapery guard). Prince Morinaga was put to death by the Kamakura Government because he displayed talents that threatened to make him an inconveniently strong Sovereign.
3. Commanding officer (armour with black points), twelfth century.
4. Warrior with high-crested helmet, fifteenth century.
5. Bowman with pavise, fifteenth century.
6. Archer with bearskin-covered helmet, fifteenth century

but no restrictions applied in the case of subjects. The designer was free to conventionalise his motives or to follow nature closely, and the embroiderer's needle came to the assistance of the weaver's shuttle. From this era may be said to have commenced the manufacture of the tasteful and gorgeous textile fabrics for which Japan afterwards became famous. The decorative design on a garment did not serve as a badge of rank. Colour indicated social status. The sovereign wore a yellow robe in the Palace and a red one when he went abroad. Deep purple and crimson followed these colours in order of dignity. A fop's ideal was to wear several suits, one above the other, disposing them so that their various colours showed in harmoniously contrasting lines at the folds on the bosom and at the edges of the long sleeves. A successful costume created a sensation in Court circles. Its wearer became the hero of the hour, and under the pernicious influence of such ambition men began even to powder their faces and rouge their cheeks like women.

The costume of women reached the acme of unpracticality and extravagance in this epoch. Long flowing hair was essential. Unless her tresses trailed on the ground when she sat down, a lady's toilet was counted contemptible, and if her locks swept two feet below her heels as she walked, her style was perfect. Then, what with developing the volume and multiplying the number of her robes, and wearing above her trousers

a many-plyed train which followed her like a gigantic enlargement of the fan that never for a moment left her hand, she always seemed to be struggling to emerge from a cataract of habiliments that threatened at any moment to overwhelm her. The records say, and the paintings of contemporary artists show, that twenty garments, one above the other, went to the costume of a fine lady *à la mode* of the tenth and eleventh centuries. Of course the object of this extravagance was not to produce an appearance of bulk. On the contrary, the aim of a well-dressed woman was to have her robes cut so deftly and to don them so skilfully that they conveyed the impression, not of a mass of stuffs, but of a play of harmonious colours. There was nothing garish or rainbow-like in the combination. The ground colour — that is to say, the colour of the outer garment — seemed at first to be all-pervading; but closer inspection showed that where these multitudinous robes lay folded across the bosom and where their pendent sleeves telescoped into one another, each ply receded by a fraction of an inch from the ply below it, so that the whole produced the effect of a slightly oblique section made across numerous superimposed layers of differently tinted silks. Much attention was directed also to the art of transmitted colour. By using material thin enough to give passage to a breath of the underlying garment's hue, and by carefully studying, not the science of colours, but

their practical values in combination and in contrast, the aristocratic lady of the Heian epoch dressed herself so that she seemed to move in an atmosphere of delightful tints, tender and rich but never crude or obtrusive. Fashion, being governed by the instincts of art rather than the suggestions of fancy, was not capricious. There were few changes of shape or style. All that was necessary was to have robes of appropriate colour for each season — robes resembling the bloom of the plum and the cherry in spring; that of the azalea and the *scrabra* in summer; that of the bush-clover, the yellow or white chrysanthemum, the dying maple leaf and the flower of the *ominameshi* (*Patrinia scabiosefolia*) in autumn, and that of the pine spray and the withered leaf in winter. There were colours that might be worn at all times of the year, but the four seasons had their distinctive tints. In a contemporary record of a fête at the Palace of the Emperor Shirakawara in the year 1117, it is stated that forty ladies made their appearance costumed in the most novel and beautiful styles. Some wore as many as twenty-five suits, showing glimpses of purple, of crimson, of grass-green, of wild-rose yellow and of sapan-wood brown, their sleeves and skirts decorated with golden designs. Others, by subtle commingling of willow sprays and cherry blossoms and by embroidered patterns picked out with gems, represented the poem of the jewels and the flowers. Others had costumes

to recall that "water is nature's mirror;" or that "the sun of spring disperses doubt and care," or that "love lurks in summer's hazes."

But if the ladies of the Heian epoch took nature's guidance in choosing colours and decorative patterns for their costumes, they relied solely on art in making up their faces. The eyebrows were either plucked out by the roots or shaved off, and in their stead two black spots were painted on the forehead; the teeth were stained until they shone like ebony; the face and neck were covered with white powder, and the cheeks were rouged.[1]

The rule still held that ladies must never show their faces in public. Those that had no carriages for riding abroad enveloped their heads in a species of silk hood. This hood helped them to manage their long hair also. The back hair was disposed under the hood, and the ends were pushed into the girdle. Generally when a lady went abroad on foot, she wore a wide-rimmed picturesque hat, and an umbrella was held over her head by an attendant.

It is to be noted that men showed greater extravagance than women in the matter of costume and ornaments. The romantic Emperor Kwazan carried a mirror on his hat, and in the reign (987–1011) of his successor, one of the Fujiwara magnates had crystal notches for his arrows. Bows, arrows, and swords became mere

[1] See Appendix, note 55.

ornaments. The sheath of the sword, the quiver, and even the bow were magnificently lacquered and sometimes studded with gems. Gold lacquer was used even for ornamenting the sleeves. No self-respecting aristocrat failed to have a looking-glass on his person or to apply perfume to his clothes. A dignified bearing was sought by severity of line, and in the beginning of the twelfth century this foible had been carried so far that a well-dressed man looked as if his garments had been cut out of boards, and his movements were carefully studied to enhance that effect. He expended as much thought on his head-gear as a modern lady of the West does upon her hat, for though the orthodox shapes of head-covering did not present much variety, there were many little points upon which care and taste might be exercised. Colours, as has been already shown, served to distinguish ranks under the system inaugurated in the seventh century, but that rule having lost much of its force in the Heian epoch, families commenced to design badges for purposes of distinction. A long skirt also began to be used in this era as a mark of social status, but the innovation did not receive extravagant development until the succeeding period.

The viands of the time and the method of cooking and serving them, though not so varied and elaborate as those of modern days, nevertheless indicated a high state of refinement. It is

not possible, of course, to speak with much detail of this subject, but, reducing the matter to arithmetic, it appears that rice was prepared in ten different ways; that there were nineteen staples of fish diet and twenty-two ways of cooking them; that there were three relishes; nine edible sea-weeds; twenty-four kinds of vegetable; seventeen varieties of fruit; eleven kinds of cake; six kinds of flesh of animals and birds, and three kinds of beverages.[1] Religious superstition interfered with diet as with everything else. The flesh of deer, boar, and cattle ceased to be eaten, but as the sport of flying hawks at wild duck and pheasants survived even the veto of Buddhism, the flesh of those birds as well as of barn-door fowl appeared constantly on the tables of the upper classes. Milk, however, and a species of cheese or butter obtained from it, went entirely out of vogue. Many combinations of edibles were tabooed from superstitious motives. For example, sesamum must not be eaten with onion; vinegar with clams; parsley with the flesh of the wild boar; ginger with plums and so on. Nearly every month, too, had its list of forbidden foods.

A strange custom had its origin in the importance attached to cleanliness in the art of cooking. Before dinner was served, the cook, dressed in ceremonial robes, came into the guest-chamber, made his obeisance, placed a cooking-board on the ground, and holding a knife in his right hand

[1] See Appendix, note 56.

and a pair of long chopsticks in his left, proceeded to kill a fish and prepare it for the fire, never allowing anything to touch it except the knife and the sticks. Seen for the first time, the spectacle was frank enough to be disgusting; but its revolting features were soon forgotten in consideration of the dexterity, grace, and solemn dignity of the officiating cook's movements and demeanour. Sometimes the host himself took a conventional part in this function by way of special compliment to his guests.

Considering how much the Japanese borrowed from China during the interval from the seventh to the twelfth century, it is not surprising to find that, like the Chinese, they used a large table for dining purposes. But they did not employ chairs or stools, nor were dishes handed round. They sat on cushions, and all the viands for each diner were ranged before him in utensils reserved for him alone. Even salt, vinegar, and soy were not in common, every convive having his own special supply. According to Chinese custom the principal viand is piled in a large bowl or dish from which all help themselves at will. Such a method could never have been reconciled with the Japanese instinct of cleanliness. Besides, the Japanese considered that a good dinner must be picturesque as well as palatable. The shaping and decorating of trays and stands, and the arranging of the viands upon them became a deeply studied art. Fine porcelains were not yet procurable, for

China, under the Sung emperors, had not begun to manufacture on a large scale the delicate, translucid ware for which she afterwards became famous, and Japan's ceramic ability was on a still lower level. Cups and bowls of solid *céladon* stone-ware filled the place of honour at aristocratic feasts, and tea,[1] on the rare occasions of its use, was drunk from cups of unglazed pottery, as was *sake* also, though a favourite decanter for serving it took the form of a section of fresh, green bamboo. Effects of purity and due subordination were studied by fashioning many of the trays and stands out of milk-white pine, cut to the thinness of a wafer, the viands themselves being so disposed as to give a play of colour and an air of variety. Lacquered utensils also had a place at the board, but were always in a minority. The *ménus* of two dinners given by Fujiwara Ministers of State in the eleventh and twelfth centuries have been handed down by annalists. One of them shows that arithmetical symmetry was considered as well as the pleasures of the palate. There were eight *entrées* — rice-dumplings, three varieties of oranges, chestnuts (boiled), dried persimmons, pears and jujubes; — eight "dry viands" — steamed clam, dried bird's flesh, dried fish in slices (eaten with soy and vinegar), roasted sea-bream, fried *suzuki* (*percalabrax*), grilled salmon, roasted cuttle-fish and lobsters; — and eight "moist viands" — carp, trout, salt-trout

[1] See Appendix, note 57.

boiled, pheasant (steamed with mushrooms), salmon-trout, boiled sea-bream, cuttle-fish soup, and *suzuki* soup. All these seem to have been served at once. When a guest took his place, he found that his section of the table bore a phalanx of vessels and utensils marshalled with symmetrical regularity. Immediately before him were a pair of chopsticks and a spoon; beyond these lay an empty cup, and, ranged in a line from left to right, having the cup for the centre, were a plate of sliced pears, a vessel of vinegar, a decanter of *sake*, and a pot of soy. Beyond these and parallel to them a row of four dishes were set, containing jelly-fish, trepang and *bêche-de-mer*. These constituted the *hors d'œuvre*. Beyond them, marshalled in two horizontal ranks of four plates each, were the *entrées;* and on the right and left, respectively, were the eight "dry viands" and the eight "moist viands," each group in two vertical ranks of four plates per rank.

Nothing in the way of table-decoration, as practised in Europe and America, seems to have been attempted. Flower and other decorative devices did, however, make their appearance in the banqueting-hall in accordance with peculiar customs. From ancient times, when offerings of scalloped paper and a mirror were presented at a shrine, etiquette required that they should be suspended from a branch of the *Clyera japonica*, since to touch them with the hand was to defile them. By refinement of conception habitual to

the Japanese, this idea was extended to presents; they were fastened to a branch of some flowering tree. Then the same fancy received obscure development at the hands of poetasters, who, in sending a couplet to a friend or a lover, accompanied it by a blossom suitable to the season. If an article was too large to be hung from a flower-spray, convention must be complied with by tying the spray to the article.[1] The same custom found another form of expression in the despatch of letters: they were placed in a split bamboo held aloft by the messenger as he ran. Social etiquette delighted in this language of allegory. Thus, in the epoch under review it was customary to place in a hall, at times of feasting or couplet-composing, a miniature ship carved in the perfumed wood of the *agallochum*. It stood upon a tray strewn with sand among which glistened fragments of rock-crystal, coral, jade, carnelians, and other brightly coloured minerals. This was the ship of fortune arriving at the isle of elysium. In later times it often took the form of the mountain of paradise with the symbols of longevity, the crane, the tortoise, and the pine.

The development of singing, dancing, and music is among the most remarkable features of the Heian epoch. It would be an extravagance to say that the era produced any great scholars in the Occidental sense of the term, for the range of accessible knowledge was extremely narrow.

[1] See Appendix, note 58.

Men profoundly versed in the Chinese philosophical writings were not wanting, but, as a general rule, refined accomplishments were the test of high education. From princes, ministers of State, and military magnates down to office-clerks and house-stewards, everybody studied singing, dancing, and the art of composing stanzas. Songs and dances of comparatively simple character had been in vogue from ancient times, as has been already seen. Now, however, not only were large drafts made upon the repertories of Korea and China, but extensive modifications and elaborations were devised by the Japanese themselves. Imperial progresses, public feasts, religious ceremonies, private entertainments, — every conspicuous incident of existence was treated as an occasion for playing instruments, treading measures, or extemporising verses. From perusing the literature of the epoch the student rises with a bewildered impression that society's perpetual occupation was to dance among forests of blossom or in the glow of the moonlight; to float over the water in boats with sculptured dragons or phœnixes at the prow, fair girls exquisitely costumed at the poles, and for passengers noblemen and high officials playing flutes and guitars and beating drums; to marshal gorgeous pageants in worship of the gods; to write verses for hanging on blossomy trees and plants or for reading at competitive fêtes, and to issue or accept invitations to feasts or sports. There were twenty varieties

of musical instruments — several kinds of flute, five kinds of drum, a species of pandean pipe, two kinds of flageolet, a species of harmonica, an oboe, a horizontal harp, a vertical harp, two kinds of guitar, and a cymbal, etc. Many of these became so famous for the beauty of their tone that special appellations[1] were given to them, and although neither their sound nor the music produced with them would have delighted Occidental ears, the Japanese were wont to say that if a skilled performer with a perfectly pure heart played on one of these famous instruments, the very dust on the ceiling could not choose but dance.

It would be an interminable task to attempt any exhaustive description of the dances in vogue during the Heian epoch. Only eight varieties of genuine old Japanese dance existed, but these were supplemented by twenty-five Chinese, twelve of Indian origin transmitted by China, eighteen Korean, and eleven Japanese adaptations. When seventy-four varieties of dance are thus indicated, it must not be understood that there were a corresponding number of salient differences of style. It is true that the movements in every case were carefully trained, and that each combination constituting a particular dance could be distinguished by practised observers. But the main feature of variety had to be sought in the pantomime. Nearly all dances performed in

[1] See Appendix, note 59.

Japan were pantomimic. The Japanese seem to have possessed, from the dawn of their national existence, a profound appreciation of the beauty and grace of cadence and emphasis in modulated muscular efforts, but the great majority of their dances had some mimetic import, and were not suggested solely by the pleasure of rhythmic and measured movement. That is the chief reason why these dances seldom produce in a foreign observer the sense of exquisite delight that they excite in the Japanese. The uninitiated stranger feels, when he sees them, like one watching a drama where an unknown plot is acted in an unintelligible language. In its origin the Japanese dance was an invocation addressed, as has been already explained, to the Sun Goddess to lure her from her cave. It was accompanied by a formula altogether subordinate to the dance, and serving chiefly to mark the cadence and the measure. Thereafter every offering made to the gods had to be supplemented by some music of motion, and gradually the dance and its accompaniment of metrical chant came to be prolonged after the conclusion of the offering, so that they ultimately constituted an important part of the ceremony of worship, as well as a prominent feature of the subsequent feast. Then followed their division into "chants of the worship-dance" (*tori-mono-uta*) and "chants of the fête-dance" (*mayebari*), both being included in the term *Kagura*, which mime may still be seen by any one visiting the shrine

of Kasuga at Nara, and is, indeed, constantly performed at *Shintô* festivals elsewhere. Towards the close of the tenth century, the chants that accompanied the *kagura* as then danced, were committed to writing, and found to number thirty-eight. They are almost wholly devoid of poetic inspiration and depend entirely on rhythm and cadence of syllabic pulsations, five beats followed by seven, five again by seven, and then seven by seven. Here are some examples: —

SPECIMEN OF THE *MAYEBARI* (OR CHANT OF THE FÊTE DANCE)

Deeply dipping deep
In the rain-fed river's tide,
Robe and stole we dye.
Rain it raineth, yet,
Rain it raineth, yet,
Rain it raineth, yet,
Dies the colour never-more;
Never fades the deep-dyed hue.

SPECIMEN OF *TORIMONO-UTA* (OR CHANT OF THE WORSHIP-DANCE)

Sacred offerings pure,
Not for mortal beings spread,
But for her, sky-throned,
Majestic Toyôoka.
Offerings for the Gods divine,
Offerings for the Gods.

These verses, it will be seen, have no pretence to be called poetry: they merely supply the mo-

tive of the dance in rhythmical language. The motions accompanying the first would suggest the dipping of cloth in lye, the dropping of rain, and immutability. The motions accompanying the second would indicate adoration, humility, and reverent presentation. In fact, all the *Kagura* dances may be described as solemn hand-wavings and body-swayings, without any movement of the feet except such as is necessary to preserve equilibrium, and without the least approach to strong emotional activity suggesting religious exaltation. The musical accompaniment was a weird, monotonous strain performed on a Japanese horizontal harp (*koto*), a shrill flute, and a drum. From the sedate *Kagura* the next step was to the *Saibara*, which may be described as street sonnets set to Chinese music with appropriate mimetic dances. In these the performers were usually men and women of the highest degree, the orchestra consisted of two kinds of flutes, and the dancers beat out the measure with ivory batons, commonly carried by nobles and ministers in that era. Sixty-one of these ancient dance-songs have been preserved. Like the *Kagura* they embody suggestions of simple scenes and simple actions, the only difference being greater variety of gesture, greater intricacy of movement, and more picturesque costumes. For example, a party of youths and maidens, robed in many-coloured garments and carrying toy nets and baskets, glide upon the scene, imitating the undulating movement of the waves,

the slow sweep of the ebbing tide, the graceful searches for sea treasures, and, finally, the inward roll of the returning sea, chanting as they move: —

> Salt-wavèd Ise's sea,
> Ebbing, ebbing, leaves behind
> Strips of salt sea-shore.
> Wave-washed sea-weed gather we?
> Sighing sea-shells gather we?
> Gems the sea-waves wore?

Differing little from the *Saibara* were the *Azuma-mai*, or dances of the eastern provinces; the *Fuzoku-uta*, or *genre* chants; the *Royei*, or lays of delight, and the *Imayo*, or songs of life. The two last had their origin in the intoning of the *Sutras* by Buddhist priests, and many of them deal with religious subjects. But the vast majority are purely secular. If one introduces a sinner lamenting that heaven has rejected him, another shows a lover perplexed about the path to the object of his affections. The irony of fate decided that these particular dances should be the ones chosen by the *Shirabiyoshi* in the twelfth century. These *Shirabiyoshi* were the prototypes of the modern *Geisha* (professional *danseuses*). Their name—white measure-markers—was derived from the fact that they originally appeared in snow-white robes, carrying a white-sheathed sword, and wearing a man's head-dress. They were not the first females who made dancing a business. In the middle of the ninth century

dancing-girls gave their services to amuse the Court, and the Emperor Uda (888-897) took one of them to his arms. But the "white measure-markers" were much more than ordinary *danseuses*. Their accomplishments were of the mind as well as of the muscles. If they could translate the motive of a couplet into an exquisitely graceful pantomime, they could also suggest novel motives and weave them into verses at once sweet and scholarly. Besides, no sacrifice overtaxed their complaisance. They became the rage in the closing days of the Heian epoch, and their favourite measure was the quasi-religious *Imayō*. It was as though love-sonnets should be sung to hymn music. The number of the *Imayō* was legion, but the manner of dancing them did not materially differ from that of the *Saibara*.

SPECIMENS OF *IMAYŌ*.

Pass we by the sea-side road,
High swell the wave-hills;
Climb we by the hill-side track,
High the cloud-clad pass;
Wend we by the northern road,
High piled the snow-drifts;
Come, come by Ise's high way,
One way, only one.

Sad sadness of the sweet past,
Sweet the sad gone-by;
Mem'ry of a severed love,
Dead but ne'er to die.

Parents part and children part,
But of woes the worst,
The parting of lovers while
Love is still athirst.[1]

There was also a large miscellany of dances with accompaniment of street-songs (*rika*) and popular ballads (*zokuyō*), the motives of which generally betrayed extreme triviality of conception and the mimetic execution showed little fidelity. Many of them nevertheless found favour at Court and in aristocratic circles, where their frank silliness made a pleasant contrast to the stately measure of the classic dance. The "cloud-land coxcombs," who painted their faces after the manner of women and carried a looking-glass in their sleeves, had no difficulty in appreciating such flights of fancy as —

Ancient rat youthful rattie,
Rats of Saiji's fane,
Gnaw the cassock, gnaw the stole,
Gnaw the vestments well.
Tell the priest, tell the prelate,
Ah! the prelate tell.

Combs ten, combs seven,
Combs I counted yestereve,
Counted one by one.
One by one have vanished, combs,
Count to-day combs none.

To these varieties of dance-motives have to be added two which had wide vogue among all

[1] See Appendix, note 60.

classes of the nation, namely, the *Saru-gaku*, or "monkey mime," and the *Den-gaku*, or "bucolic mime." The monkey mime was suggested by a courtier, who went about the Palace garden one night with the skirts of his robe tucked up, simulating cold and dancing to a refrain that will not bear translation. It was, in short, a comic dance adapted to any and every motive, its sole purpose being to create laughter. There were thirty celebrated *Saru-gaku* (or *San-gaku*, as it is also called), all of which were reputed to be capable of drawing tears of laughter from a confirmed misanthrope. The stanzas recited by *Saru-gaku* performers in early times have not been preserved. They seem to have been of a trivial, jesting character, unworthy of record and entertaining only in connection with the dance. Neither is it quite certain that the account here given of the origin of the *Saru-gaku* is correct. Some authorities maintain that the dance dates from the time of Prince Shotoku (572–621); that its real name was, not "monkey (*saru*) mime," but "three (*san*) instruments music;" that it derived the appellation from the fact of three kinds of Korean hand-drum having been then, for the first time, used to accompany songs, and that the prefix "three" (*san*) was afterwards changed into *saru* (monkey) owing to mispronunciation, or because the dance received an essentially comic character. Yet another theory assigns to the prefix *san* the significance of "dis-

orderly," and attributes that designation to the irregular nature of the costume worn by the dancer. This perplexity illustrates a notable defect of the ideographic script: two different ideographs, one meaning "disorderly" and the other "three," are phonetically identical, and might easily be interchanged by a writer relying on sound only. It matters very little, however, how the dance originated or by what name it was called at first. The only point of interest is that, in the Heian epoch, it took the form of grotesque posturing and pacing to the accompaniment of a comic couplet, the playing of a flute and the beating of a hand-drum. The "bucolic mime" (Dengaku) belonged to a still lower rank of art than the *Saru-gaku*. It scarcely rose to the level of a definite combination of graceful movements, but was rather a display of mere muscular activity, in short, a species of acrobatic performance, including pole-balancing, stilt-walking, and a kind of sword-and-ball exercise by men mounted on high clogs. It nevertheless deserves the name of dance, because the movements of the performer were measured, and because there was a musical accompaniment of flute and drum. Thus described, the "monkey mime" and the "bucolic mime" seem very trivial and unworthy of attention, but it will be seen by and by that their developments are of some importance.

If lengthy reference is here made to dancing and singing in the Heian epoch, it is because

these pastimes occupied an extraordinary share of popular attention. The few sober men of the time came to the conclusion that a "divine fox" had bewitched the nation. This delirious mood looks even stranger when contrasted with the zeal for religion and the obedience to superstition that prevailed. Sovereigns, nobles, and princes, who did not shrink from impoverishing themselves to endow temples, set up idols, or have masses said for their welfare, and who were ready at all times to shave their heads and enter a cloister, nevertheless had no hesitation about indulging in voluptuous excesses of every kind. Perhaps the explanation is that morality did not enter seriously into the programme of education. The "Scripture of Filial Piety" and the "Analects of Confucius" were studied in the schools, but neither of these volumes touched the question of a supreme being or of a life beyond the grave, and though the Buddhist priests preached a noble doctrine, their own lives did not conform to their precepts. Thus the displays of munificent piety that characterised the era seem to have been an hysterical aftermath of extreme self-indulgence rather than an outgrowth of earnest conviction.

The education here spoken of must not be interpreted in the ordinary sense of the term. There was no such thing as national education in the Nara and Heian epochs. A few schools existed in Kyōtō, but they were founded and supported by the great families and destined solely

for the instruction of the latter's children, relatives and vassals. The Wake family, the Fujiwara family, the Ariwara family, the Minamoto family, and the Tachibana family, each had its own school in the capital, but for the vast bulk of the nation no educational facilities of any kind existed. What the schools taught, too, was the art of employing the Chinese language deftly for composing stanzas and writing essays. Science and philosophy were not in the curricula. And even that meagre education ceased to be obtainable as Kyōtō fell into disorder towards the closing years of the Heian epoch. For in proportion as the Fujiwara nobles, who usurped the administrative authority, abandoned themselves to pleasure and neglected their official duties, their own followers set an example of lawlessness which provoked a retaliatory mood on the part of its victims, and, at the same time, not only did the provincial authorities become more and more independent of the central government, but the people also, rendered desperate by excessive taxation, took to robbery and piracy on an extensive scale. Gangs of bandits infested the provinces and invaded the capital itself, not hesitating even to besiege the house of a great noble. For several years a notorious leader of robbers lived openly in Kyōtō. At one time the officers of the Imperial guards trooped to the Palace *en masse* to clamour for rice ; at another, armed soldiers intimidated and despoiled the citizens. A police

force existed under the control of an official, who wielded large power. The members of the board (*Kebiishi*) over which he presided performed the functions not only of administrative police but also of magistrates and judges; the decrees of the board ranked with imperial ordinances, and persons violating them were treated as though they had disobeyed the sovereign's commands. But this organisation showed itself quite unable to preserve order. It could not check the lawlessness of the bandits that invaded Kyōtō and Nara; still less could it accomplish anything against the multitude of these depredators that infested the Island of Four Provinces (Shikoku). The bandits were, in truth, a sign of the time. Brigandage, in default of serfdom, suggested itself to many as the only possible refuge from the intolerable burden of taxation imposed to supply funds for the extravagant luxury of the aristocrats. Fourteen hundred houses lay untenanted at one time in Kyōtō, their inmates having fled to the provinces to live by plunder. The system of five-family guilds, under which the guild became collectively responsible if any of its members absconded without paying his taxes, ceased to have practical efficacy, for the guilds made their escape *en masse*. Once outside a circle of small radius surrounding Kyōtō, the fugitives were effectually beyond the reach of the central government's authority, for not only did the provincial nobles ignore Kyōtō's mandates, but

also means of communication were so bad that the Court could not hope, by its own unaided strength, to follow and arrest a fugitive. It is true that some of the barriers erected to check the freedom of men's movements had been removed, but these artificial obstructions counted for very little compared with the absence of roads and inns, the dangers from bandits and pirates and the want of any organised system of conveyances. In the middle of the tenth century, a famous litterateur describes how a journey from Tosa to Kyōtō took more than fifty days, and a century later a high official spent a hundred and twenty days getting from Hitachi to the capital. The only important place easily accessible from Kyōtō was Naniwa, the modern Osaka. It was, in effect, the port of Kyōtō, and a man could travel thither by boat, calling *en route* at four towns, and paying a visit finally at the shrine of the three Sea-Gods at Sumiyoshi, where, if he intended to pursue his journey, he prayed very fervently for protection. Many a citizen of Kyōtō made the trip down the Yodo River to Naniwa merely for pleasure. Houses of entertainment abounded in the towns on the way, and before a ship dropped anchor she was surrounded by boats carrying courtesans, dancing girls, musicians, and other agents of amusement.

It must not be supposed that the courtesan of those days descended to any depth of moral degradation when she espoused her abandoned calling.

The æsthetic enthusiasm and voluptuous delirium of the era created an atmosphere in which polite accomplishments could eclipse any environment, and ministers to pleasure had honour irrespective of their methods. In this respect the morality of the era resembled that of Greece in the days when Praxiteles carved a statue of Phryne and Apelles painted Lais. There did not indeed exist a social vacancy which the *Yujo*[1] could fill, such as was created in Athens by the seclusion and ignorance to which wives were condemned. The Japanese wife took her due place in society, and owed as much to her literary attainments as to her beauty and tact. But the marital tie did not possess, even approximately, the value attached to it in Christian communities. A woman might occupy the leading place in a household and be the principal star in any social galaxy from that of the Imperial Court downward, without having the status of a lawful spouse. Students of Japanese history, when they observe the great part played by females in the politics and Court life of the Heian epoch, cannot fail to observe also that the ethical rule applied to women's conduct was almost as lax as that applied to men's. The beautiful Aki, with hair that exceeded her stature by ten feet, who bewitched the Emperor Ichijo; the fair *danseuse* Tamabuchi, whom the staid Emperor Uda loved; the female augurs who held the threads of the Fujiwara intrigues; the group of

[1] See Appendix, note 61.

brilliant writers — Sei, Murasaki, Daini no Sammi, Izumi, Koshikibu, and Udaisho — whose names are never to be forgotten so long as Japanese literature exists, not one of these celebrities can be said to have worn the white flower of a virtuous life. In the hands of the Fujiwara nobles women were an essential instrument, since it was by giving a daughter to be the mistress of a sovereign, if not his consort, that the political supremacy of the family was maintained in each generation. A woman might always be required to sacrifice her virtue in the interests of others, and naturally she did not shrink from sacrificing it voluntarily in her own interests. She fought the battle of life with every weapon that nature had given her. Yoritomo, the great Minamoto leader, before he came to power and during his exile in the province of Izu, loved a girl of good family who bore him a son. But her father, fearing Yoritomo's enemies, caused the child to be thrown into a river and married the girl to another man under another name. Yoritomo then paid his addresses to a younger daughter of Hōjō Tokimasa, but was loved in turn by the elder daughter, Masa, who ultimately succeeded in winning his affections. By and by Yoritomo showed signs of transferring his heart elsewhere. Masa did not remonstrate with him. She sent a body of soldiers to raid the new love's house and drive her family across the border. Yet this Masa was a very high type of woman. Conspicuous for frugality, keen fore-

sight, and wise judgment, she brought up her children admirably, and despite her own fierce ruthlessness towards a female rival, she spared no pains to soften the rude, sanguinary ways of military feudalism in the Kamakura epoch. In later life, when she passed through Kyōtō after worshipping at the shrines of Kumano, the ex-Emperor conferred on her a rank seldom won even by the most prominent statesman, and asked her to visit him, but she ridiculed the idea, declaring that though a rustic like her might go to pray at a shrine, she had no place in courts and among courtiers. If women could attain to such distinction in spite of the taint of irregular sexual connections and often by their aid, virtue might well cease to be esteemed. It goes without saying that incontinence was not counted a disgraceful feature in the life of a good man. The Emperor Ichijo, who lived in the midst of most sensuous surroundings and was himself a slave to an extra-marital affection, nevertheless had sufficient nobility of character to pass a winter's night in an almost nude condition in order that he might be able to sympathise fully with the sufferings of the poor. There was, indeed, a much lower depth of immorality to which men had learned to descend in that epoch, unnatural love. To the everlasting disgrace of the Buddhist priesthood, that vice had the sanction of their practice, and no condemnations of it are found in the literature of the time. All these circumstances prepare the

student to find that the frail sister of mediæval Japan was in no sense a social outcast. She had ready access to the houses of ministers of state and other chief officials or prominent noblemen. Her singing and dancing were features at refined entertainments. She delighted aristocratic society with her clever manipulation of puppets, and she composed poems which found a permanent place in literature.[1] Men learned to call her "castle-conqueror" (*keisei*) rather than *fille-de-joie*.

The reader of course perceives that these descriptions of the manners and customs of the Japanese have been confined almost entirely to the upper classes. It must be confessed that with regard to the lower orders in the early ages, very little information is available. Independent reference will be made to the development of trade and industry, and in connection with that subject some light will be thrown on the life of the farmer, the mechanic, and the merchant. But in truth these people played a very subordinate part in the history of the nation. Except for the sake of the taxes they paid and the forced labour they performed, they were of small account. The artisan, however, especially the art artisan, became a person of great and growing importance from the time of the Empress Suiko (593–628) onward, since upon him devolved the task of building and decorating the grand temples and spacious mansions which began from that time to be called

[1] See Appendix, note 63.

into existence. Thus the painter, the sculptor, the architect, the lacquerer, and the worker in metals, all were recipients of honour, patronage, and even rank, and in that way was laid the foundation of a class of men who gave to their country many beautiful works, and ultimately won for her the distinction of being as richly dowered with the art instinct and with competence to give it faithful expression as was even ancient Greece in her best days.

Brief allusion has already been made to the *semmin*, or "despised people," who did not belong to the agricultural, the industrial, or the trading class, being regarded as social outcasts. Since some affinities may be traced between their condition and occupations and those of the Roman *servi*, the term "serfs" has been applied to the *semmin* in these pages, and the facts relating to them may conveniently be set down here.

It has been postulated by ethnologists that slavery never constitutes a vital element of any social system in which a theocratic organisation is established. Communities where the military order has obtained the ascendancy are the natural home of caste divisions which relegate the industrial and agricultural functions to serfs and slaves. A partial vindication of that theory is traceable in the story of the Japanese, among whom the tiller of the soil, the mechanic, and the trader ranked as plebeians, or commoners, in comparison with the military patricians. But if the polity of

Japan partook largely of the military character, it was purely theocratic in its alleged beginnings, and thus the social problems connected with it refuse to be solved by precedents derived from simpler organisations. The "commoners" (*heimin*) certainly were not serfs or slaves, according to any acknowledged rendering of those terms, and even the "despised people," while some of them may unquestionably be classed as slaves, do not find their exact counterpart in any system that has come under the notice of Western historians. As far back as the middle of the fifth century of the Christian era, Japanese annals refer to *semmin*. They speak of a nobleman who, being convicted of plotting against the Court (460 A. D.), was condemned to death, his posterity for eighty generations being degraded to the rank of common labourers. Thenceforth various incidents, legal enactments and ordinances exhibit six causes which operated to produce *semmin;* namely, crime, subjugation, debt, special circumstances of birth, naturalisation, and kidnapping. Treason in every form and armed conquest were sources of State slaves — corresponding to the Roman *servi publici*. A rebel or a conspirator against the sovereign suffered death — frequently shared by his sons and brothers — and all the rest of his family as well as his property were confiscated. As for conquest, the rights conferred by it held against Japanese as well as against aliens. Raids made by Japanese generals

into the Korean peninsula resulted in the capture of numerous Koreans who, being carried to Japan, were drafted into the ranks of the *semmin*, and employed in various menial capacities. Probably sections of the aboriginal inhabitants of Japan suffered the same fate after subjugation by the invaders. With regard to debt as a source of serfdom, in very early eras its influence must have been considerable, for, at the close of the seventh century the sovereign found it necessary to impose restrictions. Proclamation was then made that where a creditor prescribed serfdom as a penalty for failure to discharge a monetary obligation, interest must not be charged. Later on, the first code—promulgated at the beginning of the eighth century—sanctioned the principle that an insolvent debtor's person might become the property of the creditor, but imposed legal limits of interest, namely, that interest payable every sixtieth day must not exceed one-eighth of the principal, and that, even though a period of four hundred and eighty days had elapsed without discharge of the debt, the interest must not aggregate a larger sum than the original obligation. The issue of serf parents remained a serf, but, by a curious stretch of liberality, an immigrant from a foreign land who had been a serf in his own country, acquired his freedom on touching Japanese soil, though, if he subsequently suffered degradation, any of his relatives following him to Japan shared his fate. The ab-

duction and kidnapping of men and women and their sale into serfdom were practices against which laws had to be enacted in the eighth century. The crime was punished by a maximum penalty of three years' penal servitude. But here evidence is found of the large recognition accorded to rights of relationship, for the closer the degree of consanguinity between the person sold and the seller, the milder the penalty. A man selling his own parent or cousin became liable to two and a half years' penal servitude, but the sale of one's own child or grandchild involved only one year of punishment, and if the sale was that of a daughter, the law did not undertake to rehabilitate her.

As to the price at which a serf was valued, there is documentary evidence preserved among the archives of the Nara Court (eighth century). Three males, aged respectively 34, 22, and 15, were sold, the first two for a thousand sheaves of rice each; the third for seven hundred sheaves. Three females, aged 22, 20, and 15, sold at the same time, were appraised, the first two at eight hundred sheaves each, the last at six hundred. A hundred sheaves of rice represent a *koku* (5.13 bushels) which now sells for about 12 *yen*. Thus an adult male serf was valued at about 120 *yen*, and a female at about 100 *yen*.

The coöperation of these various causes must have produced a considerable number of *semmin*, and, indeed, the best statistics available indicate

that the ratio was five per cent of the total population. Thus, since the population in the middle of the eighth century was estimated 3,694,331, the ratio of the male and female elements being at 4.6 to 5.4, there must then have been 84,970 male serfs and 99,737 female.

The treatment of serfs in Japan did not display cruelties like those practised in ancient Rome. There were five classes: guards of the Imperial sepulchres, servants employed in Administrative offices, domestic servants, State serfs, and private serfs. Men belonging to the first two classes differed little from ordinary subjects, and were often rehabilitated. They had establishments of their own and could acquire property. Domestic serfs may be described, not incorrectly, as poor relatives who, generation after generation, earned a livelihood by performing menial household duties in families to which they were bound by ties of kith and kin. It seems a misnomer to call such persons "serfs," but they were so classed in old Japan. State serfs were captives made in war, or the domestic serfs — that is to say, the indigent relatives — of men convicted of offences involving degradation and confiscation. The lot of these serfs was ameliorated, rather than aggravated, by transfer to the State. Private serfdom seems to have been the worst condition of all. The private serf was bought and sold like any ordinary chattel, the only proviso being that the transaction must be duly registered. But the lash

was not used to compel work, nor is there any record that the idea of chaining a serf ever suggested itself to a Japanese householder or official. It would appear, too, that the prospect of an aged person's dying without having tasted the sweets of freedom, revolted ancient legislators. They enacted that, if a State serf attained the age of sixty-six, or became incapacitated by disease, he should be promoted to be an official *employé*, and at seventy-six he was rehabilitated. Even a man who had been degraded for treason, was restored to his old status when he reached the age of eighty. Other causes of manumission were emancipation (which carried with it exemption from taxation during a period of three years from the date of rehabilitation), judgment of a law court, extinction of a master's family, meritorious service, and adoption of the Buddhist priesthood, for a Buddhist priest had no social status, and consequently a serf entering the priesthood ceased to be subject to social discrimination. But despite this disposition to lighten the lot of the serf, stringent measures were adopted to preserve the distinctions of caste. Nothing save the pride of rank prevented intermarriages between the patricians and the commoners (*heimin*). If, however, either a patrician or a commoner married a serf, the offspring of the union became a serf. Even among the serfs themselves, difference of grade originally constituted a barrier to marriage.[1] These harsh

[1] See Appendix, note 64.

enactments received modification at the beginning of the ninth century. Thenceforth the issue of a mixed marriage received the status of whichever parent stood higher in the social scale. But the spirit of exclusiveness underwent no change, and there is also evidence that, in the long mediæval era of incessant war, the practice of kidnapping young persons of both sexes and selling them into serfdom constituted one of the prominent abuses of the age.

Appendix

Appendix

NOTE 1. — The total area of these islands and islets is 162,000 square miles, in round numbers, of which 16,000 square miles have been added since the centralisation of the Government in 1867. Taken in order of magnitude, the five principal islands are Hondo, or Nippon (86,373 square miles); Yezo (30,148 square miles); Kiushu (13,778 square miles); Formosa (13,429 square miles), and Skikoku (6,861 square miles). Previously to the acquisition of Formosa, the area of the Japanese empire was equal to that of the British Isles, Holland, and Belgium combined. With the addition of Formosa and the Pescadores, it has become approximately equal to the area of the British Isles, Holland, Belgium, and Denmark.

NOTE 2. — The *Koji-ki*, or annals of ancient matters.

NOTE 3. — The *Nihon-gi* (history of Japan) and the *Koga-shu* (ancient records).

NOTE 4. — Personal names were taken from the terminology of natural objects. Thus an Emperor was called "large wren," and noblemen were designated "mackerel," "red fish," "fire-fly," "weazel," "bonito," "earth-worm," "dragon," "whale," etc. No change in this system occurred until the introduction of Chinese learning and Buddhism, when curiously incongruous appellations began to be adopted; as "Head-fisherman Amida" (*Amabe no Amida*), "Silk-embroiderer Confucius" (*Kinunui no Koshi*), "Bow-maker Buddha" (*Yuge no Shaka*), "Field-dog-keeper Laotsze" (*Agata no Tsukai no Roshi*), and others equally startling, even courtesans taking the names of deities. In the ninth century the Emperor *Nimmiyo* set a new example. He gave himself a name signifying "just and righteous" (*seiryo*), being thus the first to import an abstract idea into personal

nomenclature. The fashion of the *nanori* (self-given name) was thus inaugurated. A few years previously, another sovereign (Kwammu, 782–806) caused an eminent scholar to assign posthumous names to the former occupants of the Throne, and the result was that the Rulers of Japan came to be known in history by names of which many were borrowed from the annals of China or Tartary, and none was borne during his lifetime by the sovereign thus designated. In mediæval times, strange confusion was caused by extending the old methods of nomenclature without regard to the motives that had governed them. It thus fell out that many of the official titles which had been prefixed to personal names in the early ages and used in lieu of patronyms, took permanent place in the language as family appellations, and were employed without the slightest discrimination as to their fitness. To this abuse was due the common adoption of such names as *Otomo* (Great subject), *Okura* (Imperial treasury), *Inukai* (Master of hounds), *Hatori* (Weaver), and so on. A still more indiscriminate extension of this habit is attributable to the levelling of time-honoured social distinctions that took place during the military epoch, when soldiers ruled the country and provincial captains supplanted the Court nobles in the metropolis. The old official titles then began to do duty as personal names, so that (to convert the facts into their English equivalents) the sons of private soldiers received baptismal names such as "Lord Chamberlain" or "Commodore"; the child of a farmer might be dubbed "Prince" or "Lord Chamberlain," and a courtesan or *danseuse* went by the name of "High Prelate" or "Field Marshal," even differences of sex being lost sight of in the general confusion. Another method of naming was inaugurated in very early times: the sovereign bestowed a patronym, much as titles were given in the West. In constructing such a name, the feat that it commemorated was translated into symbolical language — as when a great archer was called "noble target," — or some natural object of special beauty or grandeur was taken, or else a part of the donor's name was joined to a part of the recipient's. The greatest family that Japan ever possessed — the Fujiwara (wistaria plain) — had the honour of obtaining its designation from an Emperor. There are only 292 family names in Japan,

and of these 39 are derived from the nomenclature of the vegetable kingdom, 44 from that of other natural objects, 14 from that of geographical divisions, and the rest from ancient official titles, moral or physical qualities, and miscellaneous sources. The method that finally came into commonest vogue may be thus described. Parents in naming their sons generally adopted a numerical suffix, — *taro* (great male) for the eldest; *jiro* (second male) for the next; *saburo* (third male) for the next, and so on — and, by way of prefix, chose the name of some natural object, as *kin* (gold), *gin* (silver), *tetsu* (iron), *matsu* (pine), *ume* (plum), *take* (bamboo), etc. Thus there resulted such names as *Kintaro*, or *Matsujiro*, or *Ginzaburo*, which had the advantage of conveying information about the number of a man's elder brothers as well as about himself. Another method of constructing boys' names was to use the numerical component as prefix, appending to it the designation of an office, as *suke* (assistant official), *hiyo-yei* (military guard), *yemon* (gate guard), etc. Thus were obtained *Tarosuke*, *Jiro-hiyoyei* (abbreviated to *Jirobei*), *Saburo-yemon*, and so on. It will be easily understood that names of the latter kind were originally confined to persons eligible for the offices indicated: they are, in fact, an outcome of the ancient custom which merged the personality of the individual in his official position, and bestowed on families a hereditary title to certain posts. For a similar reason, family names, since they had their origin in offices of State, might not be borne by commoners; that is to say, they were limited to the comparatively small section of the nation which could trace its descent from the chiefs of the first colonists and had been admitted to that rank for special reasons. The rule held until modern times. Hence, if a man possessed a family name, it was possible to be at once assured that he belonged to the patrician order. Japanese names are a source of considerable perplexity to foreigners, because, in addition to the family name (*uji* or *miyoji*) and the personal name (*zokumiyo*), there was a child-name (*osana*); there was an "adopted name" or "true name" (*nanori* or *jitsumiyo*); there was a posthumous name (*okurina* or *kaimei*), and there was sometimes an art name (*go*). The "adopted" or "true" name was nothing more than a second personal name — independent of any of the suffixes or

prefixes mentioned above — which was taken by a patrician lad on emerging from childhood, the posthumous name was given by the Buddhist priests and inscribed on the tomb, and the art name was taken by a painter, an author, a musician, an artisan, or a professional expert of any kind.

Just as in the West it has always been a point of etiquette to avoid using the name of a person of rank to whom one addresses oneself, so in Japan, the post of an official, or the palace of a nobleman, or some other impersonal designation was always used in speaking to illustrious individuals. But that is a matter connected with the genius of the language rather than with the question of nomenclature.

NOTE 5. — These *gohei* (sacred offerings), as they are called, have never ceased to be an important part of the paraphernalia of worship. They may be seen to-day suspended at the shrines, near the sepulchres of the dead and before the family altar. It is supposed by some that they originally served merely as means of accentuating the outlines of the rope fences enclosing a deified tree, and that, like all other objects employed for ceremonial purposes, they were subsequently endued with sanctity of their own. Another, and more probable, theory is that they were pieces of the cloth offered to the deities.

NOTE 6. — Admirable translations of many of these rituals have been made by Sir Earnest Satow, Mr. W. G. Aston, and Dr. Florenz.

NOTE 7. — "Rock-house" (*iwa-iye*) or "demon's closet" (*oni no setsuin*) was the term applied to these caves by later generations.

NOTE 8. — It is doubtful whether in the oldest form of building the pillars were not sunk in the ground without stone foundations.

NOTE 9. — It would seem that a refined sense of tone existed among the early Japanese, for the records say that the Emperor Ojin, who reigned at the close of the third century, used ship-building wood for the body of the *Wa-kin* and that the instrument gave particularly melodious notes.

NOTE 10. — Examples of adaptability of Chinese ideographs are innumerable. Thus, *dempo* (transmitted intelligence) is the exact equivalent of "telegram;" *Kaikwan-zei* (sea-gate tax)

well expresses "customs duty;" *rigaku* (natural-law science accurately represents "physics;" *Kikwa-ho* (country-change law) conveys without mistake the idea of "naturalization law," and such instances might be multiplied *ad infinitum*.

NOTE 11. — A legend of the Empress Komyo says that, in obedience to a voice audible to herself alone, she vowed to wash with her own hands the bodies of a thousand beggars. The task had been completed as far as 999, when there presented himself a loathsome leper, covered with revolting sores. The courageous woman did not hesitate. She proceeded to wash the leper, and when he told her that if there were found in the world any woman sufficiently merciful to draw the venom from his sores with her mouth he should be healed, she did him that service. Thereupon the place was filled with dazzling effulgence; an exquisite aroma diffused itself around, and the leper, declaring himself the Buddha, disappeared.

NOTE 12. — The Emperor Temmu (673–686) ordered that every house in the land should have an altar for the worship of Buddha, and his successors called temples and idols into existence by edicts.

NOTE 13. — The Emperor Shōmu (724–748) was the inaugurator of this custom. After a reign of twenty-four years, he shaved his head and retired to a cloister.

NOTE 14. — Dōkyō, the favourite Minister of the Empress Dowager Kōken.

NOTE 15. — Only certain portions of the document are quoted here.

NOTE 16. — The Soga family. This was the clan that distinguished itself by its unique fidelity to the cause of Buddhism, and assisted Prince Shotoku to destroy its own great rival, the Mononobe clan, which inveterately opposed the foreign faith. The Soga survived the Mononobe for thirty years only. Their disloyal arbitrariness towards the Throne provoked a revolt which ended fatally for themselves.

NOTE 17. — *Taikwa* signifies "great change." It was the first year-name in Japan, the period 645–649 A.D. being called *Taikwa*.

NOTE 18. — The student will hear this memorable reformation described sometimes as the *Taikwa* (great change)

and sometimes as the *Taihō* (or *Daihō*) reform, the former term being derived from the name of the year-period (645–649) when the new legislation commenced; the latter from that of the period (701–703) when it terminated.

NOTE 19. — A residence built for himself by the Soga chief Iruka is said to have been surrounded with a palisade and provided with storehouses for weapons and armour, and each gate had buckets hung near it as a precaution against fire. The residence of the same Minister's father was encircled with moats and had arrow-magazines.

NOTE 20. — In the reign of the Empress Jito (690–696), for example, no less than seven waves of immigrants are said to have flowed to the shores of Japan, and all these strangers were hospitably welcomed and their services utilised.

NOTE 21. — The Empress Kōken (749–758) issued an edict that every house throughout the realm should be provided with a copy of the Classic of Filial Piety, and should regard it as the primer of morality; and from her time onwards successive sovereigns employed their influence to popularise Confucianism, bestowing liberal rewards upon women who distinguished themselves by fidelity to their husbands, upon children conspicuous for piety to their parents, or upon servants noted for loyalty to their masters.

NOTE 22. — The Mara of the present day lies mainly to the eastward of the old capital, but the temples occupy their original site.

NOTE 23. — A couplet written at that era embodied the popular conception of a journey: "The grandest rice-bowl used at home becomes for the traveller an oak-leaf."

NOTE 24. — Temmu (673–686).

NOTE 25. — The method of treating children's hair in the Nara epoch was picturesque. At the age of three the little one's hair was cut short but of equal length all over. It was then allowed to grow until it reached the shoulders, at which length it was kept, the hair over the forehead, however, being trimmed so as to form a fringe hanging to the eyebrows. A few years later, a boy's hair was looped up on each side in the shape of a gourd-flower, and a girl's was suffered to grow thenceforth without restraint.

NOTE 26. — Japanese antiquarians assert that both men and women of rank wore long veils in early times, and were equally averse to exposing their complexions.

NOTE 27. — Another evidence of the fidelity with which Chinese fashions were copied.

NOTE 28. — It has been alleged that by striking the palms together when about to worship, a Japanese intends to attract the attention of the deity. The explanation is fanciful and groundless.

NOTE 29. — It is built with logs of wood, hexagonal in section, laid horizontally, so that the walls present a deeply corrugated appearance. Though repaired from time to time, this storehouse retains the exact form given to it by its architects nearly twelve centuries ago.

NOTE 30. — Out of this rule grew the appellation *shinzo* (new building) still commonly applied to Japanese wives in the middle classes.

NOTE 31. — Mr. Basil H. Chamberlain, in the admirable preface to his "Classical Poetry of the Japanese," explains this point with great clearness, and M. D. E. Aston, in his exhaustive treatise on "Japanese Literature," shows why rhyme would scarcely be possible to a poet using the Japanese language, namely, that as all Japanese words end in one of the five vowels, constant iteration of the same sound would be inevitable.

NOTE 32. — This is illustrated by the fact that the Japanese use the same word (*uta*) to express "song and poem."

NOTE 33. — A stringed instrument played with both hands; the fingers of the right hand being armed with ivory tips, and the fingers of the left being used to press the strings.

NOTE 34. — "Fujiwara" signifies "Wistaria plain." The name was conferred by the sovereign on Kamatari in recognition of his services.

NOTE 35. — The consort of the late Emperor Kōmei (1847–66) was a Fujiwara, and the bride of the present Prince Imperial is also a Fujiwara.

NOTE 36. — Kyōtō continued to be the Imperial capital during 1,074 years, until the *Meiji* Restoration of 1867, when the Court was transferred to Yedo (now Tōkyō). Seventy-seven Emperors held their courts successively in Kyōtō.

During an interval so protracted, the city, of course, underwent many changes, but to this day its general plan remains on the lines of its earliest projection. It was built after the general scheme of Nara, but on a much grander scale. The outline was rectangular, 17,530 feet from north to south, and 15,080 feet from east to west. Moats and palisades surrounded the whole — the system of crenelated walls and flanking towers not having been yet introduced — and the Imperial Palace, its citadel, administrative departments, and assembly halls occupied the centre of the northern portion. The Palace was approached from the south, its main gate opening upon a long street 280 feet wide which ran right down the centre of the city. Thus the city was divided into two equal parts, of which the eastern was designated "left metropolis," and the western, "right metropolis." The superficial division was into districts, of which there were nine, all equal in size except those on the east and west of the Palace. An elaborate system of subdivision was adopted. The unit, or house, was a space measuring 100 feet by 50. Eight of these units made a row; four rows, a street; four streets, a division; four divisions, a district. The entire capital contained 1,216 streets and 38,912 houses, with a population of about two hundred thousand. The arrangement of the streets was strictly regular. They lay parallel and at right angles, like the lines on a checker-board. The Imperial citadel measured 3,840 feet from east to west, and 4,600 feet from north to south. On each side were three gates; in the middle stood the Palace, surrounded by the buildings of the various administrative departments, and in front were the assembly and audience halls. The nine districts were divided from each other by main streets, varying in width from 170 feet to 80 feet. They intersected the city from east to west; were numbered from 1 to 9, and were themselves intersected in turn by similar streets running north and south, and by lanes at regular intervals. The buildings were in general lowly and unpretentious. Even in the case of the Palace, the architects observed the austere canons of the *Shintô* cult, which prescribed purity and simplicity as the essential attributes of refinement; and in the case of the citizens' dwellings, every effort to obtain lightness, airiness, or ornamentation was reserved

for chambers opening upon inner courts, or looking out on miniature back-gardens, so that the front effect was sombre and monotonous. Many of the houses were roofed with shingles, but some had slate-coloured tiles, and the Palace itself was rendered conspicuous by green glazed tiles imported from China. The conception of such a city at such an epoch — half a century before Lodbrok the Dane sailed up the Seine, and fifty-five years before the birth of Alfred the Great — bears eloquent testimony to the highly civilised condition of Japan and to the Emperor Kwammu's greatness of mind and resources.

NOTE 37. — Such persons were named *ronin*, literally, "wave men;" that is to say, individuals without any fixed status or employment. They are met here for the first time in Japanese history, where they thenceforth figure as a perpetual element of unrest.

NOTE 38. — He employed able men without any regard for the part they had acted in his own life. He gave the command of the Bando troops to Tamura-no-maro, whose father had intrigued to procure the Throne for a different prince, and he appointed as tutor to the Heir apparent a man who had twice endeavoured to thwart his purposes.

NOTE 39. — It is noticeable that this spirit of exclusiveness did not take any account of alien origin. Tamura-no-Maro, who commanded the Emperor Kwammu's Bando soldiery, was descended from a naturalised Chinaman. Yet, on returning to Kyotō after the final defeat of the Yezo, he received the Emperor's daughter in marriage, and became the father of the next sovereign, Heizei.

NOTE 40. — The extreme possibilities of this system were illustrated in the case of the Fujiwara chief Michinaga. He held the office of Regent during the reigns of three Emperors (987–1037); his three daughters became the consorts of three successive sovereigns, and he was grandfather simultaneously of a reigning Emperor and of an heir apparent. Nothing was allowed to interfere with the consummation of this nobleman's designs. Desiring that his daughter, Aki, should enter the Palace where his elder brother's daughter, Sada, already held the position of Empress, and unwilling that his child should have inferior rank, he devised for Aki a special title, carrying with

it all the privileges of an Imperial consort. There were thus two Empresses, each living in a palace of her own.

NOTE 41. — The memory of this unfortunate statesman, Sugawara-no-Michizane, is surrounded by a halo of romance which affords an insight into Japanese character. He belonged to an ancient family of professional litterateurs, and had none of the titles which in that age were commonly considered essential to official preferment. By extraordinary scholarship, singular sweetness of disposition, and unswerving fidelity to justice and truth, he won a high reputation, and had he been content with the fame that his writings brought him, and with promoting the cause of scholarship through the medium of a school which he endowed, he might have ended his days in peace. But, in an evil hour, he accepted office, and thus found himself required to discharge the duties of statesmanship at a time of extreme difficulty, when an immense interval separated the rich and the poor, when political power was usurped by some and abused by others, when the arbitrariness and extortions of the local governors had become a burning question, when the nobles and princes were crushing the people with merciless taxes, and when the finances of the Court were in extreme disorder. Michizane, a gentle conservative, was not fitted to cope with these difficulties, and his situation at Court was complicated by the favour of an ex-Emperor (Uda) who had abdicated but still sought to take part in the administration, and by the jealousy of the Fujiwara representative, Tokihira, a young, impetuous, arrogant, but highly gifted nobleman. These two men, Michizane and Tokihira, became the central figures in a very unequal struggle, the forces on the one side being the whole Fujiwara clan headed by the unscrupulously daring and ambitious Tokihira; those on the other, a few scholars, the love and respect of the lower orders and the benevolent tolerance of the self-effacing Michizane. The end was inevitable. Michizane, falsely accused of conspiring to obtain the Throne for his grandson — an Imperial prince had married his daughter — was banished to Dazaifu, and his family and friends were either killed or reduced to serfdom. The story is not remarkable. It contains no great crises or dazzling incidents. Yet if Michizane had been the most brilliant statesman and the

most successful general ever possessed by Japan, his name could not have been handed down through all generations of his countrymen with greater veneration and affection.

NOTE 42. — The Emperor Seiwa (859–876) was the first, and his example was followed by Uda (888–897). But there was a difference. Seiwa, after surrendering the sceptre, devoted himself sincerely to prayer and pilgrimages: Uda took the title of *Hō* (high pontifft) and, as the head of all the Buddhist prelates, led a life of splendour scarcely inferior to his previous state.

NOTE 43. — The posthumous name given to the deceased by the Buddhist priests was inscribed with letters of gold on a black lacquered tablet, and was entrusted to the care of the temple where the body was buried.

NOTE 44. — The "divine tree" was the emblem of *Shintô*. It will therefore be understood that these menacing demonstrations, though inaugurated by the Buddhist priests, were employed sometimes by *Shintô* ministers also. Instances of the latter nature were comparatively rare, however.

NOTE 45. — This included the birth of a domesticated animal or bird, barn-door fowl excepted.

NOTE 46. — These rules are quoted from a book of etiquette published at the beginning of the tenth century.

NOTE 47. — A species of guitar with three strings; essentially a woman's instrument.

NOTE 48. — This game was called *iro-bumi-awase* (composing love-letters), and the method of procedure corresponded to that of the *uta-awase* (composing poems). It found great favour during the reign of Horikawa (1087–1107).

NOTE 49. — Every Chinese ideograph has a basic element, which is called the radical; and a phonetic part which suggests the sound. Numbers of ideographs being mononymous, have the same phonetic part, with different radicals, and numbers have the same radical with different phonetic parts. Given a certain radical, to construct from memory as many as possible of the ideographs composed with it; or given a certain phonetic, to draw up an exhaustive list of the mononyms it belongs to, — such was the method of the old-time calligraphic competitions.

NOTE 50. — Every one of these halls and galleries had its appellation, as, the "hall of everlasting benevolence," the "hall of sweet savour," the "hall of perpetual peace," the "hall of virtue and justice," and so on.

NOTE 51. — Hence the wife of a nobleman was usually called Kita-no-kata, or "the northern personage."

NOTE 52. — The dimensions of a mat were invariably six feet by three. It served as a unit of superficial measurement. Instead of saying that a room measured so many feet each way, people said that so many mats could be spread there. Two mats made a *tsubo* (six feet by six feet), the unit of area for lands and buildings alike. The convenience of this method of measurement is great. If a house is said to have so many feet of frontage and so many feet of depth, little idea of its accommodation is conveyed to ordinary minds, and even the dimensions of a room, when stated in feet, are difficult to picture to the imagination. But when a Japanese hears that a house has fifty *tsubo*, for example, of superficies, he knows that one hundred mats can be spread there, and as he is quite familiar with the space enclosed in a room of six mats, or eight mats, or ten mats and so on, he obtains at once a clear conception of the number of rooms that such a house may contain and their size. He speaks, also, of the cost of building at so much a *tsubo*, and can thus estimate at once the expense of erecting a house with a given amount of accommodation.

NOTE 53. — The paper of that time was not sufficiently tough to be fitted for such a purpose.

NOTE 54. — Echigo is now the chief centre of kerosene production in Japan.

NOTE 55. — The custom of putting red and gold on the lip had not yet been introduced.

NOTE 56. — Tea and two varieties of *sake*. The *sake*, or rice-beer, of that time was brewed just as it is at present. But, after brewing, it was often mixed with ashes of the *Clerodendron tricotomum* to give it a bitter taste. It then received the name of "black *sake*."

NOTE 57. — It is uncertain when tea was introduced into Japan. As early as the reign of Shomu (724–748), a tea-drinking entertainment took place in the Palace. The Buddhist

priests seem to have obtained the leaf from China, and to have remained almost the exclusive users of the beverage until the beginning of the ninth century, when the Emperor Saga was so pleased with tea given to him by a Buddhist prelate that he ordered the plant to be cultivated in five provinces near the capital. But he did not succeed in making it popular. Its very name was forgotten for nearly three centuries.

NOTE 58. — A spray of flowers thus attached to a present was called *kokoro-bana* (blossom of the heart; *i. e.*, flower of good wishes). Originally real flowers were used, but subsequently artificial blossoms were substituted or even ribbons. In a still later age, it became customary to decorate with a paper butterfly the handle of a vessel used for pouring out *sake* on occasions of congratulation, and it is believed that the modern habit of attaching coloured paper to a gift had its origin in the "heart-blossom."

NOTE 59. — The annals of the Heian epoch contain the names of five celebrated flutes, four guitars, and nine harps. The names given to them were such as "Verdant leaves," "Rippling current," "Summer landscape," "Restful peace," "Autumn wind," "Pine-scented breeze," "Memories of the past," and so on.

NOTE 60. — Sung by the celebrated Shizuka when, after her parting from Yoshitsune, she had to dance before his brother and enemy Yoritomo.

NOTE 61. — *Fille de joie.* The term makes its appearance for the first time in books written at the beginning of the tenth century.

NOTE 62. — A striking illustration of the part played by women and of the morality of this Court is furnished in the closing scene of the Heian epoch. The Emperor Toba gave his heart to a concubine, Toku (afterwards called Bifuku-mon-in). The heir-apparent, Sutoku, though nominally Toba's son by his consort Soshi, was suspected to be the son of his grandfather, Shirakawa, who had been a lover of Soshi. Toba, at the instigation of his mistress Toku, caused the heir-apparent to step aside in favour of Toku's son. But the latter died childless at an early age. Sutoku then seeking to recover his birthright, was opposed by the lady Toku, who maintained that

her son had been done to death by Sutoku's incantations. These complications inaugurated the struggle between the two great clans of Minamoto and Taira, and plunged the nation into a succession of sanguinary wars.

NOTE 63. — The names of these courtesans are appended to poems in three of the Japanese classical anthologies.

NOTE 64. — The reader will observe that a serf marriage was legally recognised. It was not a mere *contubernium*, as in Rome. In many respects, as indeed might be expected, the condition of the serf in Japan resembled that of the slave in Athens.

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